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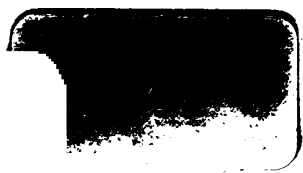
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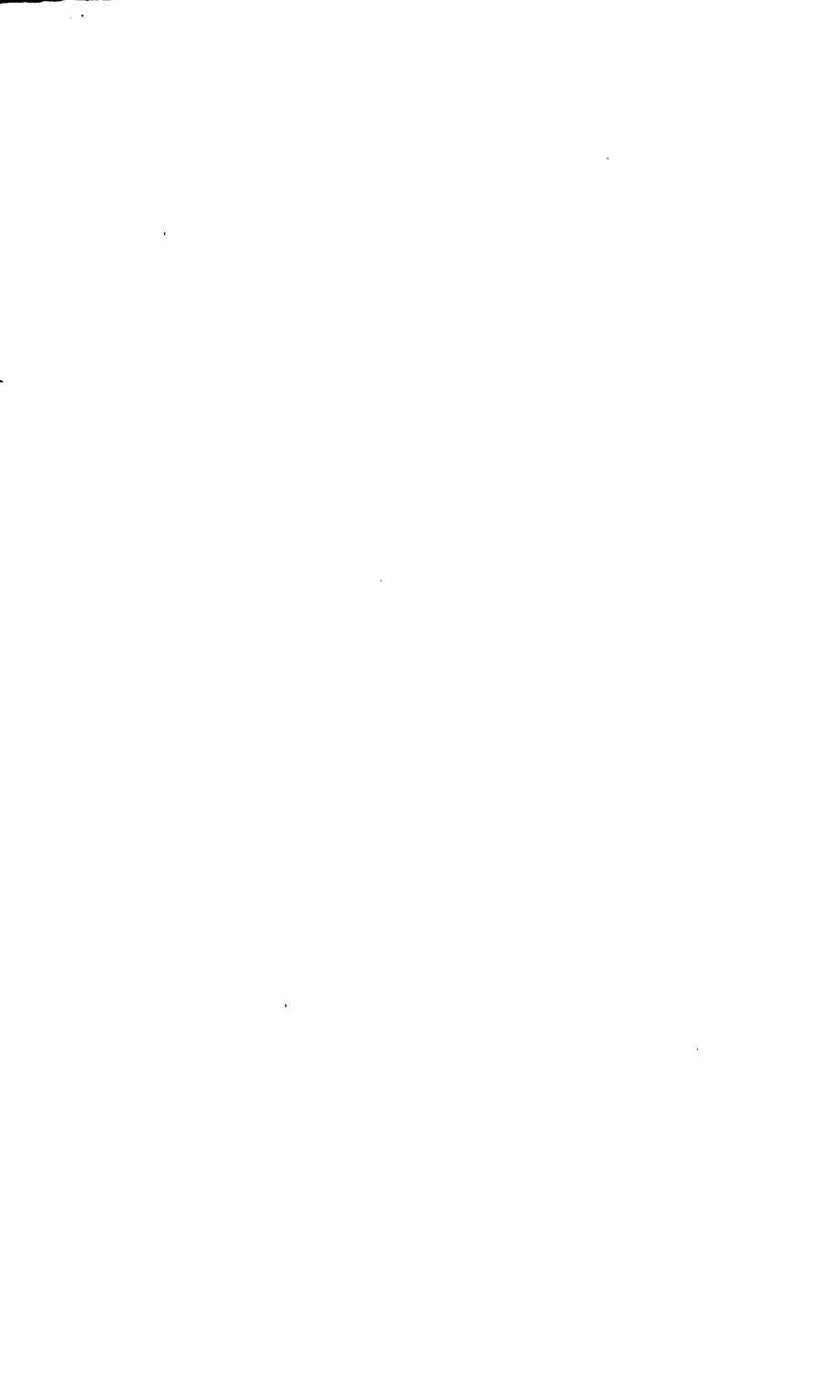
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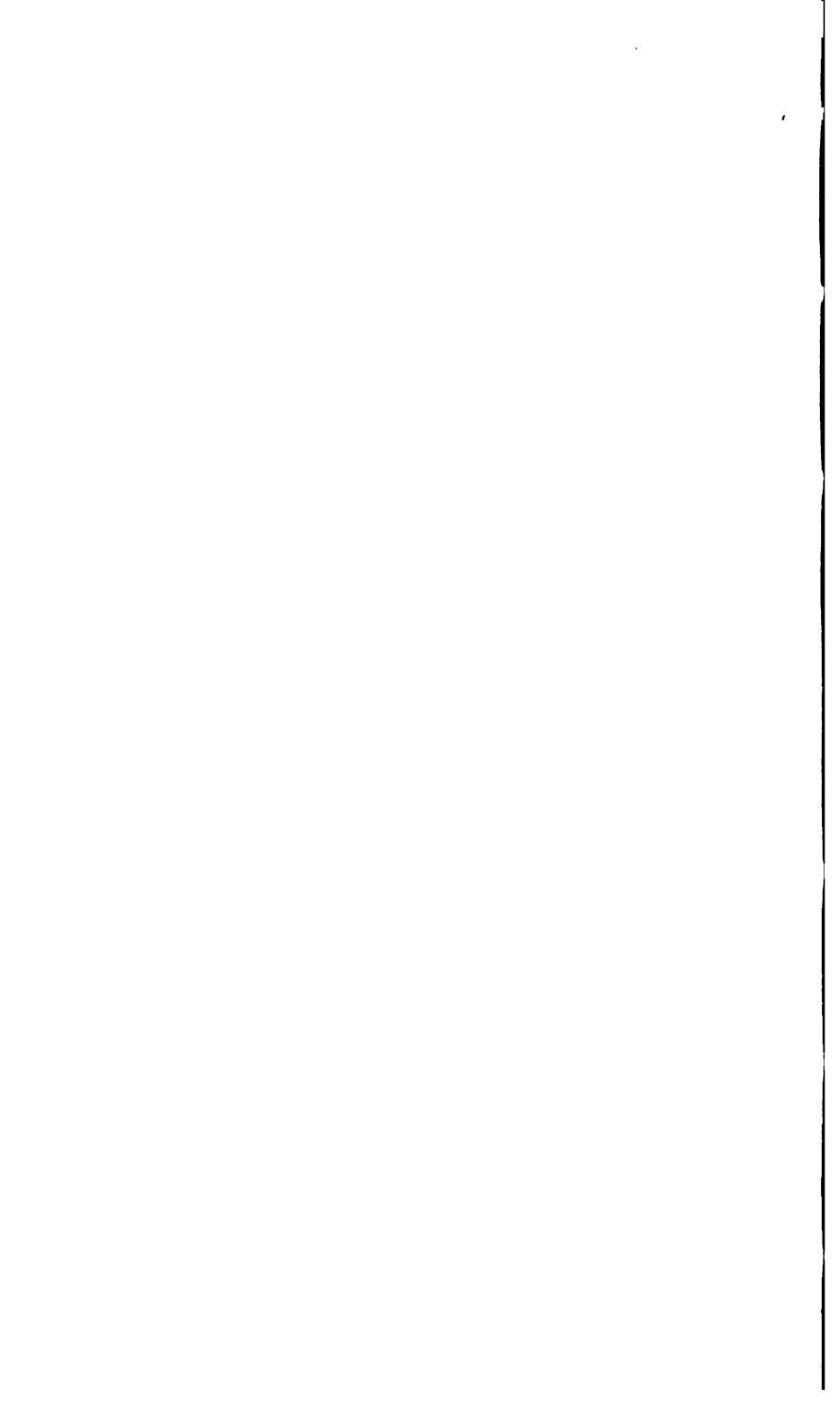


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AN
HISTORICAL AND CRITICAL
ESSAY

6736

ON THE
REVIVAL OF THE DRAMA
IN
ITALY.

BY

JOSEPH COOPER WALKER, M. R. I. A.

HONORARY MEMBER OF THE SOCIETIES OF PERTH AND DUBLIN, AND
OF THE ACADEMIES OF CORTONA, ROME, AND FLORENCE.

L'Europa Letteraria, se vuol esser giusta e grata, non farà mai invidia della vera gloria d' Italia, ma più tosto riconoscerà ella i suoi maestri negli Italiani scrittori al rinascimento delle scienze e delle lettere.

MATHIAS.

EDINBURGH:

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PREFACE.

HAVING dispatched the Historical Memoir on Italian Tragedy, I thought a further use should be made of my collection of Italian dramas, which, through the active kindness of my friends and my own exertions, has increased considerably, and is still increasing. I was therefore induced to turn my attention to the Revival of the Drama in Italy, a subject which some of the Reviewers seemed to think I had treated too slightly. An amplification of the Introduction to my former Work was my original plan; but as I advanced, I had so often occasion to extend the boundaries I had marked out for myself, that my labours at length brought forth a volume. To this pleasing, yet arduous, task, several years have been devoted. Every means of obtaining information, that my

Salkeld 2. Feb- 1944

retired situation could afford, has been employed. Something, I trust, I have done, but still much remains to be done. The subject is by no means exhausted. I have only chalked out a path, which others, I hope, will follow with more success. To the praise of genius I have no claim ; but the humble merit of patient industry will not, I flatter myself, be totally denied me.

IN the course of my inquiries, I have been often astonished at the neglect into which the Literature of Italy appears to have fallen in England, during the last century. It would seem to have shrunk before the bold and imposing air which the Literature of France assumed in the brilliant age of Lewis XIV. and continued long after to wear. While the ancient classics were assiduously studied, and quoted almost to satiety, the classics of modern Italy were scorned or neglected. The *cliquant du Tasse* was caught from the lips of a cold critic ; and the white cliffs of Albion were taught to re-echo the opprobrious sound. The celestial visions of Ariosto and Tasso were despised or unheeded, while the frigid conceptions of the French academicians were extolled

to the skies. Even common justice was denied to the Italian writers. If they were read, it was merely with a view either to censure, or to misrepresent, them. It is certain, at least, that Addison, in the critique on the *Aminta*, ascribed to him, was guilty (perhaps through inadvertency) of misrepresentation. Nor does that elegant writer, in his *Travels through Italy*, seem to have paid any attention to the literature of the country, or to have evinced any respect for the memory of its departed bards. He did not visit with veneration any spot rendered sacred by the former abode, or by the ashes of any great Italian poet. He walked unmoved along the banks of the Po and the Arno. The sweet notes of their swans did not vibrate on his ear. But Addison is not the only English traveller liable to this charge. I do not recollect a single British tourist, who appears to have visited with 'reverence due,' the church raised by Sannazaro,—the tomb of Ariosto,—or the dungeon of Tasso.

BUT the Literature of Italy is now about to rise with new splendour in England. The exertions of such writers as Mr. Roscoe, Sir Richard Clay-

ton, Mr. Grefwell, Mr. Shepherd, and Mr. Mathias, cannot prove ineffectual. The laudable object which they have in view must at length be attained. When the human powers are uncontrolled, the battle is ever to the strong. The Muses of Italy will no longer languish on the borders of the Thames. Already they seem to revive. Mr. Roscoe has taught them to modulate in numbers sweet as their own; and Mr. Mathias has, on several occasions, borrowed their lyre, and struck it with a master-hand. To co-operate, however feebly, with such writers, is an honour to which I presume to aspire.

As I would rather be accused of vanity than suspected of ingratitude, I shall now proceed to acknowledge some of my obligations on the present occasion.

To the accomplished proprietor of the library of Castle-Browne I am indebted for the use of some very scarce and curious dramas. Amongst these was the *Timone* of Bojardo, a drama which was highly important for my present purpose; and for which I should probably have sought in

rain elsewhere,—at least in this country. But Mr. Browne has not been less indefatigable, nor less successful, in accumulating literary rarities, than his father-in-law, the late Major Pearson.

To the library of my amiable and learned friend Isaac Ambrose Eccles, esq. of Cranoe, I am also indebted for the use of some books of rare occurrence,—particularly a copy of Quadrio's elaborate work, which had once belonged to Giuseppe Baretti:

The Rev. H. J. Todd, who has raised a monument of elegant structure and imperishable materials to the memory of Milton, promoted my undertaking with friendly zeal, and made considerable accessions to my stock of Italian dramas.

To two natives of Italy I am also infinitely obliged. Signor Gaetano Polidori, who has enriched his own language with two excellent tragedies, and a spirited version of the Comus of Milton, not only added some rare dramas to my collection, but favoured me with several useful hints,

and some valuable information. And to the correspondence of the learned Signor Tommaso de Ocheda these pages owe much.

THE materials of which my 4th Section is composed, were chiefly drawn from a large collection of Rappresentazioni of the fifteenth century, which had been formerly in the Pinelli collection. For the use of this precious volume, I am indebted to the politeness and liberality of an eminent literary character, to whom I have not the honour to be personally known,—to the admirable biographer of Lorenzo de' Medici, detto il Magnifico.

DURING a visit with which my amiable and much esteemed friend Dr. Robert Anderson of Edinburgh favoured me, in the autumn of 1802, he recommended an extension of the biographical part of my plan; and suggested some hints for the improvement of my Work in general. To the hints of one of the most elegant and judicious critics of the age, and a friend whom I so highly esteem, it may be presumed I paid due at-

tention, though I may not have been so fortunate as to meet all his ideas.

IN illustrating my Analyses with specimens, I should, perhaps, have fulfilled my duty, if I had given the extracts in the original language only. But I was willing to gratify the mere English reader; and have therefore subjoined translations. Of these, some are close, others free: in all, I hope it will be found that either the letter or the spirit of the original has been preserved. For several of these versions I am indebted to kind friends, particularly to the Rev. Henry Boyd, the admired translator of Dante; and to William Preston, esq. who has lately acquired an accession of literary fame by his translation of Apollonius Rhodius. Nor must I omit to add, that some of the Parnassian flowers which will be found in these pages, were strewed by fair hands,—I name, with pride, Miss Watts and Miss Bannerman. In the translation of *Ambra*, Miss Watts has evinced her capability of giving new graces to Italian poetry. And in *Tales of Superstition and Chivalry*, Miss Bannerman has displayed a richness of fancy, an energy of thought and expression, and

a strength and brilliancy of colouring, which have not often been surpassed. Of such auxiliaries, who would not be proud?

HAVING acknowledged the assistance I received, I shall now mention that which I wanted.

In the construction of my plan, and in the composition of the work, there are, I am confident, many faults. But these faults are all my own. I had no aid. I had no friend within my reach to consult. I wrote in rural seclusion; and often (I may add) in ill health. This will account for the many inelegancies and inaccuracies with which I fear the reader will meet. I do not, however, mention this circumstance, in order to bespeak indulgence: I only mention it to moderate surprise, if my Work should (as I fear it will) be often found obnoxious to criticism. In further extenuation of the faults in the present, and my former, Work, I might urge the very unfavourable circumstances under which both were partly written, and partly printed. While the *Historical Memoir on Italian Tragedy* was passing through the press, the dreadful rebellion of 1798

haged in this country. And while the first proof of this Essay lay upon my table, and part of the work still remained unfinished, the late insurrection broke out. It may therefore be presumed, that though I felt the most perfect confidence in the wisdom, vigilance, and mild energy, of government,—a government to which Ireland is infinitely indebted,—I could not immediately, after such an event, enjoy the mental tranquillity so indispensably necessary for the elaborate finishing of literary composition: How I have acquitted myself under such circumstances, I am yet ignorant.

ITALIAN Literature has winged so many of my solitary hours, which would otherwise have passed heavily along, that I shall beg permission to indulge my feelings, before I take leave of the Public, in acknowledging the accident which, if my memory does not deceive me, first excited the strong propensity by which I have been so long impelled to the cultivation of the Literature of Italy. While still young, and undetermined in regard to any particular literary pursuit, I was led, by the voice of fame, to seek out a translation of the pathetic tale of Ugolino, by the pre-

sent Earl of Carlisle. The powerful interest and exquisite beauties of the story, heightened by the excellence of the version, directed my attention to Dante,—and Dante led me on. Should these pages be honoured with the notice of the accomplished Nobleman in question, who is only known to me by his virtues and his talents, I hope he will pardon, if he should not accept, this little tribute of gratitude.

J. C. W.

St. Valeri, near Bray, Ireland.

October 24, 1804.

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A Table exhibiting the marks of reference, by which such versions as the author has been favoured with, are distinguished.

* Rev. H. Boyd.—** Miss Watts.—*** William Preston, Esq.—Miss Bannerman's name is prefixed to the versions which she supplied.

ERRATA.

- Page 5. line 1. for Attellanes read Atellanes.*
Note (4.) l. 9. for Pullicinello r. Pullicinella.
l. 11. for Attellanes r. Atellanes.
l. 16. for Attella r. Atella.
l. 17 for Attellanes r. Atellanes.
p. 16. l. 18. for 1526 r. 1523.
p. 28. l. 26. for Saviour r. Preserver.
p. 54. l. 13. dele (x) figure of reference after declared, and place it after introduced, l. 1.
p. 64. l. 16. for idythum r. idyllium.
p. 75. last line, dele the figure (4) of reference after distinguished.
p. 76. l. 9. for annunzia r. annunziatione.
ibid. after angel place figure of reference (4)
p. 81. note (9.) second column, l. 5. for Annunzia r. Annunziatione.
p. 90. third line from bottom, for mici r. miei.
p. 120. note (4.) last line, for illumineatd r. illuminated.
p. 144. l. 9. for subtle r. subtilo.
p. 152. note (9.) second column, l. 4. for it will appear r. it will probably appear.
p. 173. l. 14. for curtains of above r. curtains above.
p. 183. l. 18. for lumber r. crowd.
p. 184. l. 10. for trough on, or groove in, the stage r. groove, or machine, that remained on the stage.
p. 192. l. 2. for dignified case r. dignified case.
p. 214. l. 19. for restliens r. resiliens.
p. 220. last line, for Cristus r. Christus.
p. 221. note (8.) last line, for 430 r. 230.
p. 254. note (2.) second column, l. 13. for Arlequins r. Arlequino.
p. 256. l. 13. for delle r. della.
ibid. third line from the bottom, for Fama r. Famæ.



ON THE

REVIVAL OF THE DRAMA

IN ITALY.

I. **I**T is the opinion of Riccoboni, that the fall of the majestic fabric of the Roman empire did not totally crush the stage in Italy : he supposes the dramatic art suffered no suspension in that country from the time the Latin theatres closed, to the period from which its revival is usually

A

dated¹. It was still cultivated ; but the artificers were rude, and the materials still ruder. In support of his opinion, this ingenious writer adduces the respectable authority of the primitive fathers. Both Tertullian², and St. Augustine³, he remarks, speak of the scenic amusements of their time, using the distinctive denominations of comedy and tragedy ; and the epistle of Cassiodorus to Praefectus affords a proof of the existence of the stage in Italy in the sixth century⁴. He then proceeds to observe, that the drama still continued, during the succeeding ages, to maintain its credit among the people, experiencing no change, but what was produced by the revolutions which occasionally took place in the customs, the manners, and the spirit, of the times. This assertion he fortifies with a quotation from Thomas Aquinas, who lived in the thirteenth century. This holy father, on being consulted in regard to the propriety of permitting the exercise of the *Histrionalis ars*, or Histrionic art, indulgently admitted, that amusement is necessary to the happiness of man ; and therefore decided, that these histriones, or strollers, who used their privilege with moderation, — *qui moderate ludo*

¹ *Reflex. hist. sur les diff. theat. de l'Europe. Ann. 1740. p. 1.* This is also the opinion of Quadrio, *Stor. d'ogni Pagine. tom. v. lib. II. diff. 3. cap. 2.*

² *Comediarum et Tragediarum horum meliora Poëmata. Tert. de Spect.*

³ *Et hæc sunt scenarum tolerabiliora ludorum, Comediarum scilicet et Tragediarum. S. August. de Civit. L. II. cap. 8.*

⁴ *Cass. lib. I. var. epist. XX.*

utebantur,—should not be interrupted in the exercise of their profession⁵. St. Anthony was willing to subscribe to this opinion, provided the histriones paid due observance to place, time, and circumstance; that is, they were not to convert the church into a theatre, nor to perform during the seasons ordained by the canonical laws to be kept holy⁶; neither were the clergy to indulge in so unseemly a profession as that of a player⁷. The great body of evidence collected by the active piety of Jeremy Collier, to prove the immorality of the stage during the early ages of the christian church⁸, may be said to serve as a bulwark to the position of Riccoboni, and all the proofs he has adduced in its support.

It would seem, however, that the histriones of these holy fathers were mere buffoons, such as used to frequent the convivial meetings of the Romans, and sometimes appeared at the table of the munificent Can Grande in the time of Dante⁹.

⁵ *Divus Thomas. 2. 2. quest. 168. art. 3. in response ad tertium.*

⁶ *S. Ant. in iii. part. sue summæ tit. 8. cap. 4. sess. 12.*

⁷ *Non enim decet clericam talia exercere.*

⁸ See his angry *Short view of the Eng. stage. Lond. 1698. ch. vi.*

⁹ Tiraboschi, speaking of the splendour and hospitality of the court of Can, says, "alle lor cene agguinevasi il piacere di armoniche sinfonie, di buffoni, di giocolieri." *tom. v. s. 31.* He then proceeds to relate,

that Can observing that these buffoni drew off the notice of his court from Dante, who was then his guest, asked, perhaps tauntingly, how it happened that they should be so much admired, and command such general attention, while Dante sat at his table unheeded? To this the poet, "proud and full of his wrongs," haughtily replied, "you will cease to wonder, when you consider, that similarity of manners is the strongest bond of attachment."

They were, in fact, the legitimate descendants of the ancient Mimi¹, a race of strolling jesters or buffoons, of which the ARLECCHINO of the modern stage is the representative². To the histriones, then, I am of opinion, the Italian stage has little obligation: indeed I could not be easily convinced that they promoted essentially the revival of the drama in Italy, though I am ready to admit that their talents might have occasionally assisted in supporting it during its infancy. What others wrote, they represented.

Nor do I think it can be safely affirmed that the modern secular drama was posterior, in Italy, to the sacred drama, or that it rose immediately in that country, out of the Mysteries and Moralities of the church³; an opinion in which I am supported by the weighty suffrage of bishop Warburton. In his account of the rise and progress of the modern stage, he says, "as to Italy, by what I can find, the first rudiments of their stage, with regard to the matter, were profane subjects, and, with regard to the form, a corruption of the

¹ Prima gl' Istrioni si chiamavano Mimi, perchè cantavano e ballavano insieme. Gravina, *della Trag.* p. 55. The same learned writer thus defines the word Istrioni: "il rappresentatore si chiamava Histrion dall'antico vocabolo Toscano *bister*, cioè Latinamente *Ludio*, perchè dei Ludioni, ovvero Ballatori si servivano alla rappresentazione del drama." *ibid.* Vid. also *Venuti, Descriz. dell'*

ant. Città d'Ercol. Rom. 1748. p. 62.

² Vid. *Hist. du Th. Ital. cb. I. Lett. of Literat. p. 204. Hist. Mem. on It. Trag. p. 197. note (1). La Poet. de Q. Orax. Flacc. Rom.* 1784. p. 44. and *Appendix. No. F.*

³ "Les farces ou pantomimes sacrées," says M. Landi, "furent le berceau du théâtre moderne." *Hist. de la Litt. de l'Ital. t. iii.*

ancient Mimes and Attellanes ⁴." But in opposition to this opinion, it will, perhaps, be said, that the FRAIERNITÀ DEL GONFALONE was instituted so early as the year 1264, for the express purpose of representing the Passion of our Saviour in the Coliseum of Rome ⁵. It may also be urged that the miracle-play of Christ was represented with applause in the year 1298, in the hall of the palace of the patriarch of Cività Vecchia ⁶; and it may likewise be asserted, that even in 1243, the Passion and Resurrection of our Saviour were exhibited in the Prato della Valle, at Padua ⁷. All this I admit: but in the representation in the Coliseum, the characters were filled by inanimate figures, and the fable, of course, conducted without dialogue; nor have we any reason to doubt

⁴ *Notes on the life and death of K. Rich. III.* This assertion of the learned prelate receives considerable support from a discovery made early in the last century. In the year 1727, a bronze figure, of high antiquity, was found at Rome, from which it appears that the modern Neapolitan Pullicinello is a lineal descendant of the *Mimus albus* of the Attellanes. *Quadrio, tom. v. p. 220* gives an engraving of this figure; and the inscription on the base, recording the event of the discovery, is inserted in *Hist. du Theat. It. t. ii. p. 317*.—Attella (whence the Attellanes derived their name) was a small town near Naples, now called Aversa. *Append. No. II.*

⁵ The preamble to the statutes runs thus: "The principal design of our fraternity being to represent the Passion of Jesus Christ, we or-

dain, that in case the Mysteries of the said Passion are represented, our ancient orders shall be observed, together with what shall be prescribed by the general congregation." This sacred spectacle, which commenced with the last supper, and ended with the crucifixion, continued to be annually represented in the coliseum during holy and passion week, till the year 1546, when it was prohibited by Paul III.

⁶ *Hist. of Eng. Port. vol. i. sect. 6.*

⁷ This exhibition took place in the time of the magistracy of Galvano Lanza, brother-in-law to the tyrant Ezzelino. It originated in a meeting of a religious society of both sexes, who began about the year 1208 to celebrate the festival of Easter in the prato, or meadow, della Valle, with singing and dancing.

that the exhibition at Cività Vecchia was also mute. Such representations, therefore, are not better entitled to the denomination of dramas than the Presèpio of Naples², the conversion of St. Paul in hæmatites, by Girolamo Genga³, or the Descent into Hell, which was exhibited on the Arno in the year 1304¹. It would seem to be the opinion of Signor Signorelli, a minute inquirer, and a competent judge, that the first speaking sacred drama of which Italy can boast, was "Della Passione di nostro Signor Gesù Cristo," by Giuliano Dati, bishop of San Leo, who flourished about the year 1445². Now if this fact can be established, it only remains to prove that there were speaking secular dramas antecedent to the

¹ The Presèpe, or Presèpio, which is still exhibited at Naples, may be denominated a mute mystery. It is a representation of the birth of our Saviour, with all the concomitant circumstances.

² Vasari relates, that while Genga resided in Valli, a village near Urbino, "per non stare in ozio, fece di matita una conversione di S. Paolo con figure, e cavalli assai ben grandi, e con bellissime attitudini," tom. v. p. 223. Il Cecca, a famous Florentine engineer, who died in 1499, excelled in designing such representations.

³ *Vite de' Pittori*, tom. i. p. 385. For a minute description of this horrible spectacle see *Append. No. III.*

² *Stor. de' Teatri*, tom. iii. p. 28. Bernardo di Mastro, Antonio e Mariano Particappa, were Dati's coadjutors in the composition of this work. It was first printed in Milan per Valerio et Girolamo di Meda; and

reprinted at Venice, 1568, per Dominico de' Francescibi. Of the manner in which this piece was exhibited, no account is recorded; but a Mystery on the same subject, which was represented (1437) about the same time at Metz; had like to prove fatal to two priests, who, while personating our suffering Saviour, were successively suspended to the cross. *Rech. sur les Theat. de France*, t. i. p. 254.

Mr. Roscoe refers the union of the rappresentazione with dialogue, to the age of Lorenzo de' Medici; (vol. i. p. 330), the period about which Dati flourished. And Tiraboschi supposes that the rappresentazione of *Abramo et Isaac*, by Belcari, which was "donné (at Florence) l'an 1449, fut peut-être le premier dans ce genre, où l'on vit de l'arrangement dans les scènes et dans les discours." *Hist. de la Litt. de l'Ital.* iii. p. 243.

time of Dati, and my position will stand upon a rock.

When a rapid succession of barbarous nations, rushing like a mighty torrent from the bleak regions of the north, had subverted the Roman empire, the affrighted Muses fled with precipitation to the vine-clad hills and olive groves of Provence. Here they lay trembling and silent till the beginning of the eleventh century, when, animated by the soothing voice of peace, they ventured forth, and warbled a few wild but sweet strains to the accompaniment of the lute and harp. About this time arose an order of itinerant bards, distinguished in history by the name of TROUBADOURS, to whose rude effusions the revival of the drama in Italy may perhaps, in a great degree, be ascribed. Such of the chieftains as had escaped the perils of the crusades, and returned to their castles, affected the customs as well as the magnificence of the east³; and “no high scene of festivity was esteemed complete that was not set off with the song of the bard.” Poetry now became a profession; and Troubadours might be seen wandering from castle to castle, and from

³ Perhaps it will yet appear that the favourite tales, as well as the customs and manners of the east, were introduced into Europe by the crusaders. Indeed Mr. Warton considers the Saracens either at their emigration into Spain, about the ninth century, or at the time of the crusades, as the first authors of ro-

mantic fabling among the Europeans. *Hist. of Eng. Poet. diff.* i. This is also the opinion of M. Le Grand. *Fab. ou Cont. du xii. et du xiii. sec. tom. i. pref. xlii.* Mr. Hole has clearly shown Ariosto's obligations to the *Arabian Nights Entertainments*, in the learned preface to his *Arthur. Dub.* 1790. p. 7, 8.

court to court, to fill the office of the ancient rhapsodist. From France they passed occasionally into Italy, and enlivened the convivial meetings in the respective courts of the petty states of that enchanting country. The marquis Montferrato, and Can Grande of Verona, were among their most munificent patrons. Nor were the other Italian princes less anxious to induce them to assist in heightening the festive joys of their hospitable halls; and with that view they held forth the alluring hope of liberal remuneration: an hope which they seldom failed to realize. The allurements succeeded. "I could name," says a French writer, "some Troubadours of the Venetian state, of Lombardy properly so called, of Tuscany, of Piedmont, and of Savoy: I could prove, that those of our provinces were assembled in all the courts of Italy ⁴." And it appears from the learned researches of the abbé Millot, that when, in those ages, the marquisses of Este gave a solemn fête, or held a court at Ferrara, the Troubadours not only proffered their services, but that they, and such of their attendant Jougleurs as understood the language of Provence, were invited to assist ⁵. Choosing for their subjects the fictions of romance, or the no less marvellous feats of chi-

⁴ *Lett. sur les Trouvers, lett. 4.* The author of *Hist. Litt. des Troub.* mentions several Italians who embraced the profession of Troubadours. tom. i, p. 334. tom. ii, p. 344. Had Bembo's history of these wandering bards

been completed, it would probably have dispelled much of the darkness which rests upon this interesting subject. *Lett. lib. v, p. 89. Ven.* 156.

⁵ *Tom. i, p. 412.*

valry, these itinerant bards first composed their metrical tales for solo-recitation, and sung them individually, to the accompaniment of the prevailing instruments of the day. As their numbers increased, they introduced interlocutors into their tales, which thus gradually assumed a dramatic form. Maffato alludes to these exhibitions in the prologue to the tenth book of his "Gesta Italicoꝝ." "Lectures," he says, "were delivered in the thirteenth century, in the lingua volgare; and modulated verses were recited in theatres, and upon temporary stages⁶." And in a chronicle compiled in the twelfth century, it is said the praises of Orlando and Oliviero were sung by histriones in the ancient theatre of Milan, and the entertainment usually concluded with instrumental music and mimicry, (or, to use the words of the chroniclers, *decenti motu corporis*, appropriate gesticulation), by mimi and buffoons⁷. Among the productions of Anselmo

⁶ "In vulgares traduci sermones, et in theatris et pulpitis, cantilenarum modulatione proferri." The pulpitum was, I presume, a kind of booth, such as were formerly erected in large areas in different towns in Lombardy, and in the arena of Verona. In these temporary theatres, plays were represented in the daytime, without any other light but what was afforded by the sun, whose rays they were so constructed as to admit. *Acc. of the Theat. in Europ. Lond. 1741, p. 55.*

⁷ "Super quo histriones cantabant, sicut modo cantantur de Orlando, et Oliviero; finito cantu, bu-

soni et mimi in citharis pulsabant, et decenti motu corporis se volebant." *Muratori, de Antiq. Medii Ævi. tom. ii. p. 844* From the words "decenti motu corporis," in the foregoing extract, it would seem that the Mimi of Italy, as well as those of France and England, accompanied their songs with mimicry and action, and sometimes, perhaps, condescended to tumble and to dance. Vid. *Notes and Illust.* referring to Bishop Percy's learned and ingenious *Ess. on the Ant. Eng. Minst.*—*Reliq. of Anc. Eng. Poet. Lond. 1794.* A passage in the *S. Giovanni e Paolo* of Lorenzo de' Medici, which will

Faidit, one of the most celebrated of the early Troubadours, are enumerated both comedies and tragedies, one of which, entitled "L'Heregia dels Preyres," (a ridicule on the council which condemned the Albigenes) he wrote during his residence in the court of the marquis of Montfer-rato*, where he is said to have received for his ingenious productions, (*ingegnose invenzioni*) rich and beautiful gifts, in horses, vestments, and other articles of value†.

The productions of Faidit were known to, and admired by Petrarca. He not only honours him with a place in his "Trionfi," but is supposed to have borrowed from one of his productions the design of that poem‡. Indeed, to the Trou-

be cited in its place, favours this conjecture. And we are told by Baudelle, that at the marriage of the marquis of Tripalola, "s'intervennero giocolatori e buffoni, li quali assai fecero gli spettatori ridere." *Part. iv. nov. 5.*

* Vid. *Ist. della Volg. Poes. tom. ii. p. 43.* "Anselm," says Rymer, went to live with the marquis of Montferrato, who took part with the count of Thoulouse; and to him Anselm ventured to show a comedy, which till then he had kept secret from every body, and there had it acted. *Short View of Trag. p. 70.* Anselm's musical powers are celebrated by Dr. Burney, who gives his verses (accompanied with the original melody) on the death of Richard I. of England, whom he had attended to Palestine in the Holy war. *Hist. of Mus. vol. ii. p. 241.*

† Of the value of such gifts an idea may be formed from a passage in an ancient chronicle of Verona,

where it is related, that of the two hundred vestments distributed among the buffoni and giocolieri on the marriage of the Scaligiera, "la minore costava dieci docati."

‡ Anselmo

Et mille altri ne vidi, a cui la lingua
Lancia e spada fu sempre, e scudo
et elmo.

I saw, with many others, Anselm
there,

Whose tongue was shield and helmet,
sword and spear.

Rymer.

‡ "Egli ha fatto un canto contenente," says Nostradamus, "la descrizione del palagio, della corte, della stato, e del podere d'Amore, ad imitazione del quale compose il Petrarca il suo Trionfo d'Amore." *Vita de' Poet. Prov. tradotte dal Crescimbeni. p. 44.* Perhaps the *Tempo d'Amore* of Galeotto, marquis of Carretto, was also composed in imitation of this canto, as it was written in the court of the marquis of Mont

badours, the obligations of Dante ³ and Petrarca are infinite. And perhaps it would be no improbable conjecture to suppose, that the three comedies ascribed to the latter, were written in imitation or emulation of the poets he admired. Of these pieces little more is known than the subjects and the titles. In a letter to a friend, Petrarca says, " I do not deny that at a very tender age I wrote a comedy under the title of " *Filologia* ⁴." Of this drama not a vestige remains ; but of the other two, fragments are still existing in the Laurentian library. One turns on the story of Medea, and the other is founded upon the expulsion of cardinal Alborno from Cesena in 1357. This piece is considered by the abbè de Sade, rather as an eclogue than a comedy. It is, he says, a satire against the cardinal and the pastors of the church. Only three interlocutors appear in the scene, John, Conrade, (an inhabitant of Cesena), and the author himself under the name of Gerulus ⁵. But perhaps those were not the only dramas which fell from his pen ; for it appears that he sometimes yielded

ferrato, where Anselmo died in 1220, and where the MS. might have remained till that court became the asylum of Galeotto,

³ Vid. *Trat. de Volg. Elog. cap. 6, et cap. 13. della traduzione di Trifino. Purg. Cant. xxvi.*

⁴ " Comœdiam me admodum tenera ætate dictasse non inficior sub *Pbilologia* nomine." *Petr. Epist. fam.*

16. lib. vii. Another dramatic attempt has been ascribed to Petrarca by the commentators on Plautus. They attribute to him the prologue to, and the first scene of the *Bacchides*, as given in the Cologne and Basil editions of the Latin poet.

⁵ *Mem. pour la Vie de Petrarq. tom. iii. p. 458.*

to the solicitations of the Jougleurs, and afforded them the charitable aid of his muse. In a letter to Boccaccio, he upbraids him with indolently declining to grant an occasional composition to these strolling actors and musicians, and adds, "I have often experienced their importunities. They come now but rarely to me, either out of respect to my age, or because my studies have taken another turn, or perhaps deterred by my frequent refusals; for, often weary of their importunate demands, I treat them with harshness, and remain inflexible. Sometimes, touched with the misery or humility of the suppliant, I employ a few hours in drawing from the treasures of my mind a production which enables him to live. I have seen several depart from me poor and naked, who returned some time after clad in silk, and with replenished purses, to thank me for having saved them from perishing for want⁶." Of the nature of the productions thus humanely supplied by the bard of Valchuisa, we may form

⁶ *Ibid.* p. 655. 656. The number of persons who followed this '*idle trade*' in Italy, during the middle ages, was immense. Muratori, in describing a fête given by the Malatesta at Rimini in 1324, says, "si contarono mille cinque cento cantambanchi, giocolieri (or Jougleurs) commedianti, e buffoni, musici, sonatori, oltre a quelli che già sissi erano al soldo de' principi." *Ann. d' Ital.* The same indefatigable compiler relates, that at the marriage of a prince

of Mantua in 1346, there were distributed "a' tal gente 338 vestì." And we are told by Corio and Giovio, that "settemila braccia di panni buoni furono date a buffoni e giocolieri," on the marriage of Galeazzo I. with Blanche of Savoy, in 1350. Vid. also the *Cronica di Ben. Aliprando. lib. ii. cap. 53.* In the list of persons who attended the famous council of Constance, (1418), 346 Jougleurs are enumerated. *L'Enfant, t. ii. p. 415, 416.*

some idea from another passage in the same letter : " The Jougleurs," says he, " are a race of people who have little wit, great strength of memory, and yet more impudence and effrontery. Having nothing of their own, they subsist on the spoils of others ; they wander from court to court, emphatically declaiming such verses in the vernacular tongue as they have learned by heart." But these poetical contributions of Petrarca being either lost, or mingled anonymously with the productions of other poets, we can only conjecture, that, being intended for recitation by strolling companies of actors, they were cast in a dramatic form. We know, however, with certainty, that the Troubadours of his time wrote decided dramas, which, it may be presumed, were represented either by themselves, or by the Jougleurs, who formed part of their train⁷. Anselmo Faidit, whom we have already mentioned, was aided in the representation of his pieces by his wife Guiglielmona de Soliers, a beautiful, learned, and accomplished nun, who had been seduced by "*belle parole*," says the historian, to elope with him from a monastery in Aix. And Petrarca bestows on his friend Tommaso Bambasio, the celebrated lutanist of Ferrara, the sur-

⁷ " Quelquefois durant le repas d'un prince on voyoit arriver un Trouverre inconnue avec ses Menestrels ou Jougleurs, et il leur fai-

soit chanter sur leurs harpes ou vielles les vers qu'il avoit composés." Fontenelle, *Hist. du Theat.*

name of "Roscius," in allusion to his excellence in the science of acting, and the art of declamation⁸. As a further proof of the existence of a stage in Italy in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, we might observe that several of the Troubadours who frequented the Italian courts in those ages, are entitled *Comici*, by their historian Nostadamus. Dante, too, seems to allude to the theatrical exhibitions of his time, in the following passage in his "Paradiso:"

Da questo punto vinto mi concedo
Più : che giamai da punto di suo thema
Soprato fosse comico, o tragedo 9.

No actor yet when first the stage he trod,
Ere found such terror freeze his curdling blood,
As I, appall'd by this unusual light.

*

Dante's words, however, only admit of an inference in favour of my position or hypothesis; but the "Cronica Bolognese," of the same period, expressly mentions "*i giuochi di scena*," amongst the amusements of the day. And other

⁸ *Mem. pour la vie de Petrarq. tom. iii. p. 650.* Petrarca bequeathed his lute to this modern Roscius. "Magistro Thomæ Bambasie de Ferraria lego leutum meum bonum, ut eum sonet non pro vanitate sæculi fugacis, sed ad laudem Dei æterni." *Test. del Petrar.* This bequest leads to a supposition, that the instrument which Petrarca desires his friend

should only employ in celebrating the glory of God, he had formerly struck himself, while chanting the praises of his mistress. Music may therefore be numbered with the accomplishments of this enchanting poet; and the rocks of Vaucluse, it may be presumed, often resounded 'the deep sorrows of his lyre.'

⁹ *Cant. xxx. β. 8.*

chroniclers enumerate *commedianti*, or comedians, with the *giocolieri*, *buffoni*, and *musci*, who frequented the Italian courts during the middle ages. Having proved, I hope satisfactorily, the existence of a stage in Italy that was neither merely sacred nor pantomimical, previous to the time of Giuliano Dati, the co-existence of secular dramatic poets is a natural conclusion. But we shall not rest our position upon so feeble a stay : we shall adduce instances.

Maffei gives an extract from an inedited composition wearing a dramatic form in the libreria Saibante, which he supposes to have been written about the year 1200, and represented at the Festa of Siena in 1272, described by Giugurta Tommasi. In this piece several interlocutors are introduced conversing in elegant Latin verses, which are accompanied with a version of the dialogue in the dialect of Lombardy, (the language in which it was recited); and, in the margin, stage-directions are given in the same dialect¹.

It is related by Giulio Sansedoni, in the life of B. Ambrogio Sansedoni, Sanese, that on his obtaining from Gregory X. in the year 1272, absolution for the Siense, who had incurred the cen-

¹ In un raro codice di questo libreria Saibante, segnato col numero 408, che per lo meno è del 1200, si legge un componimento, dove parlano più personaggi in forma di Comedia cog' eleganti versi Latini, ma framezzati dalla traduzione in volgar Lombardo, e in margine : *mo* (cioè *modo*, ora) *parla Pampilo a la vetrana* (val *vecchia* dal Latino *veterana*), *mo la vetrana risponde, mo parla Galatea.*—*Test. Ital. diffsa.*

ture of the church by joining the party of Corradino against the holy see, he instituted an annual fête in commemoration of this happy event. This "*magnifica festa, o rappresentazione*," says the historian, was exhibited in the principal square of the city, on a large platform nobly adorned in the manner of a theatre, with scenes beautifully painted. The fable of this piece, it appears, was neither mystic, nor founded upon a scriptural fact, or holy legend; it consisted of a detail of the chief circumstances of the disgrace of the Sienese, and their restoration to the bosom of the church, accompanied with singing, poetic declamation, and the delusive aid of machinery².

Riccoboni possessed a comedy in terza rima, entitled "*Floriana*," which, though not printed till 1526, he refers, on the authority of the style, to the same age³.

And among the literary treasures of the Ambrosian library, is still preserved a MS. comedy,

² *Lib. I. cap. 14. p. 63. Roma pel Mascardi, 1611.* The words of the biographer of Ambrogio, as reported by Apost. Zeno, are, "il detto B. Ambrogio avendo impetrata l'anno mcccxxxiii. da Papa Gregorio X. l'assoluzione dalla scomunica, in cui erano incorso i Sanesi per aver seguite le parti di Corradino contra la chiesa, eglino in memoria di questa assoluzione e ad onore di esso Beato fecero innalzare nella pubblica piazza un gran palco, nobilmente ad-

dobbato, e a foggia di scena teatrale vagamente dipinto, sopra il quale ne veniva rappresentata con macchine, versi, e canti la storia." *Et. It. t. i. p. 488.*

³ *Hist. du Theat. Ital. tom. i. p. 155.* After the article *Floriana* in his catalogue, he says, "J'ai l'édition de 1523, on connoît bien par la dureté de la langue que cette comédie est écrite ou du tems de Dante, ou peu de tems après et au plutard vers l'an 1400."

called " Paulus, comedia ad juvenum mores corrigendos," by Pier Paolo Vergerio, il Vecchio, of Istia, in the Venetian territories, a celebrated philosopher, poet, and historian, who died in 1431, in the service of the emperor Sigismond, at the advanced age of eighty-two ⁴.

In further support of our position, we may add, that soon after the death of Petrarca, the troubadour B. de Parafols, son of a physician in the service of Joan queen of Naples, wrote, according to Nostradamus, five beautiful tragedies, ("*belle tragedie*") upon subjects drawn from the history of the bloody and libidinous reign of his father's royal mistress. These tragedies were entitled " L'Andriasse,"—" La Tharanta,"—" La Malhorquy-na,"—" L'Allamanda,"—and " La Johannata." This last piece would seem to be a recapitulation of the former four; for it details, says M. de Beauchamps, all the remarkable events in the life of Joan from the age of seven to the time of her death ⁵. These dramas (*che valevano un tesoro*, says the historian) were secretly presented to Clement VII. the anti-pope, then residing at Avignon, who, in recompense for this precious gift, conferred upon the poet a canonry in the church of Sisteron, whither he retired, and

⁴ For an account of Vergerio, | *Liverp.* 1802, p. 60. note (c), and *Jovii*,
vid. Mr. Shepherd's valuable and | *Eleg.*
interesting *Life of Poggio Bracciolini*, | ⁵ *Recher. sur le Th. de France*, i., p. 143.

where he died (1383), a few days after his investiture, not without suspicion of poison ⁶.

Luca di Grimaud of Genoa, another troubadour of this age, wrote some dramas with a view to expose the profligate character of Boniface VIII. These, as well as the dramas of Parafols, were written in the volgare Provenzale, which was then so universally understood in Italy, that it was the language usually employed by the Troubadours, and their musical attendants, the Jouteurs; and, according to Varchi and Giambullari, it was the dialect most cultivated and best understood by the Italian ladies of this age, and therefore the language chiefly used by the Tuscan writers themselves⁷. Hence we may presume it to have been, at least in many instances, the language of the Italian stage, such as it was, at that dark period ⁸.

⁶ *Ist. della vol. Poet. tom. ii, p. 153.* Though Parafols was a native of Provence, it appears from a variety of circumstances in his history, that his tragedies, as well as many of his other productions, properly belong to Italy. However, they are only adduced as an additional proof, that the Troubadours sometimes exercised their talents in dramatic composition.

⁷ "Non solo i rimatori, ma i professori di Toscana, si servivano delle voci, e de' modi del favellare Provenzale." *Erco. p. 206.* "The Pro-

venzal," says Rymer, "was the first of the modern languages that yielded and chimed in with the music and sweetness of rhyme, which making its way by Savoy to Monferat, the Italians thence began to file their volgare, and to set their verses all after the chimes of Provence." *P. 77. See also Eleg. It. Ven. 1729, p. 23.*

⁸ "È verisimile," says Quadrio, "che già fin dal secolo XII. fossero le commedie in Italia per introduzione de' Provenzali praticate, e sparse." *V. v. p. 54.*

II. **T**HUS we may perceive that while the church was confined to the representation of mute spectacles, the drama was gradually re-assuming its pristine form ; and it also appears, from the authorities which we have adduced, that its revival may, in a great degree, be ascribed to the Troubadours⁹ ; an honour, however, which they must be content to share with their coadjutors, the Jougleurs. But the first decided attempt in Italy at a regular drama, was made by Albertino Mussato¹, the historian of Padua, who flourished about the year 1300. Taking Seneca for his model, Mussato wrote two Latin tragedies, entitled, from their respective heroes, "Eccerinis," and "Achilleis." For the first of these (the hero of which is Ezzelino da Romano, the tyrant of Padua²), the author was

⁹ This is the decided opinion of Quadrio, v. iv. p. 53. The author of *Letters on the Origin and Progress of Spanish Poetry*, Lond. 1781. p. 233, 234, seems to think that Spain had the same obligation to the Troubadours.

¹ Tiraboschi having observed, that the tragedies of Mussato are written on the model of Seneca, significantly adds, "ma un cattivo originale non poteva fare che una più cattiva copia."

² Ezzelino is said to be indebted to Mussato for his infernal origin. "Eccelino, a notable tyrant (says Sir John Harrington), whom one Mussato, a Paduan, in a tragedy he

wrote, affirms to have been gotten by the devil." *Note on trans. of Orti. Fur. cant. 3.* It would seem, however, that Mussato only adopted a notion that, it may be presumed, was still prevalent in Padua when he wrote his tragedy. "It was a constant tradition (says an historian of the house of Este), that a devil clothed with a body supplied his (Ezzelino's) pretended father's place when he was begotten." *Hist. of the House of Este, Lond. 1681, p. 138.* Boiardo adopts this tradition. *Orti. Inn. lib. ii. cant. 25.* And after him, Ariosto, *Orti. Fur. cant. 3. st. 33.* Dante places Ezzelino amongst his relatives in hell. *Inf. cant. 12.*

honoured with the laurel crown by the bishop and municipality of his native city. Here we are presented with a proof of the predilection for the "*domestica facta*," even in the infancy of the drama; for the "*Achilleis*," though, perhaps, of equal merit as a composition, acquired Muffato no civic honours. Of the "*Achilleis*," as the subject is trite, our notice shall be slight; but we shall descend into an analytical review of the

ECCERINIS.

Personæ Tragediæ.

ADHELEITA, *Mater.*

LUCAS, *Frater.*

ECCERINUS, } *Fili.*

ANSEDISIUS.

ALBERICUS, }

COMMILITONES.

ZIRAMONS, *Miles.*

NUNCIUS.

CHORUS.

AS I.

Adheleita, the mother of Ezzelino and Alberico, informs her children, that their father was a demon. While she is preparing to disclose this dreadful secret, she faints, and immediately on her recovery commences the relation. Ezzelino asks,

Qualis is adulter, mater?

Who was the partner of thy guilty bed?

In reply to this question, she describes her lover :

*Haud tauro minor
Hirsuta aduncis cornibus cervix riget,
Setis coronant hispidis illum jubæ,
Sanguinea binis orbitibus manat lues,
Ignetque nares flatibus crebris vomunt.
Favilla patulis auribus surgens salit
Ab ore spirans. Os quoque eructat levem
Flammam, perennis lambit et barbam focus.*

*His warped neck
In brawny strength excels the surly bull.
His staring locks are bristled like the mane
Of some fell boar; and from the sanguine glow
Of his distorted eyes, a venom'd ooze
Incessant flows. His nostrils vomit still,
Like some Æolian forge, a fiery gust.
Quick scintillations flash from either ear,
He belches a volcano hissing round
His hairy cheek and long depending beard.*

*

Exulting in his hellish origin, Ezzelino rejoices with his brother at this discovery, and then retires to offer a prayer to his father. Here the poet stops the action of the piece to relate, in his own person, the manner in which this prayer was preferred.

*Sic fatus imâ parte recessit domus
Petens latebras, luce et exclusa caput
Tellure pronum sternit in faciem cadens :
Tunditque solidam dentibus frendens humum,
Patremque sæva voce Luciferum ciet.*

Thus having spoke, the lone recess he seeks
Of the interior dome, and every beam
Of light, with anxious care, excludes ; then prone
Salutes his mother earth, and stretch'd along,
Gnashing his teeth, with loud infuriate tones
Invokes his father from the depth of hell.

The Chorus terminate the act with demonstrations of fear and sorrow for the public disasters.

Act II.

A messenger recounts the disgraces of the state, and the success of Ezzelino, who, by means of treacherous arts and acts of cruelty, already reigns in Verona and Padua, of which he has recently taken possession. This conquest is achieved during the interval between the first and second acts, and is supposed to be accomplished in the course of a few days³. The Chorus lament the public misery, and implore the vengeance of heaven upon the cruel oppressor.

Act III.

The two brothers boast of their newly acquired conquests, and of those to which they aspire. Ziramonte announces the death of Monaldo ; an event at which the tyrant rejoices : but a messenger interrupts his joy with an account of Pa-

³ This violation of the unity of time, exacted from Sig. Signorelli the following just observation : | "l'azione non è una ; il tempo basterebbe per un lungo poema epico."

dua being surpris'd and taken by the exil'd citizens, with the aid of the troops of Venice, Ferrara, and the Pope. His followers exhort him to march, without delay, against the allied powers.

Invade trepidos, tolle pendentes moras,
Fortuna vires ausibus nostris dabit.

Delay not to attack the trembling foe,
And fortune will befriend thee.

The Chorus conclude the act with a brief account of the expedition of Ezzelino against Padua, his return to Verona, and barbarous vengeance on the prisoners ⁴.

ÆT IV.

A messenger relates some of the principal events of the war in Lombardy ⁵, and concludes with an account of the death of Ezzelino. The following sapphic ode, sung by the Chorus, closes this act.

⁴ Having suppressed a rebellion in Padua, he took twelve thousand prisoners, and shut them up in a theatre of wood, under the guard of his victorious army, whom he ordered to throw open the rampires, and set the pile on fire. *Villani, Ist. Fiaren.* The observatory stands on the spot where this barbarous deed was committed. The cruelty of this monster on that occasion excites the indignation of Ariosto:

La Traspadana abbia Ezzellin Tiranno,

Che fa di sangue uman la terra
brutta
Dovunque passa, e quei di Padoa il
fanno.

Opere, Ven. 1739, p. 576.

See also *Orl. Inn. lib. ii. cant. 25*, where this barbarous deed is noticed, and the epithet "*ferudo cane*" bestowed on the perpetrator.

⁵ "He used to boast," says Gibbon, "that since Charlemagne, no prince had possessed such absolute sway over the Lombard states," *Antiq. of house of Bruns.*

Vota solvamus pariter datori,
 Digna tantorum juvenes bonorum,
 Vos fenes, vos et trepidæ puellæ
 Solvite vota.

Venit à summo pietas Olympo,
 Quæ malis finem posuit patratæ,
 Occidit sævi rabies Tyranni,
 Paxq. revixit.

Pace nunc omnes pariter fruamur,
 Omnis et tutus revocetur exul.
 Ad lares possit proprios reverti
 Pace potitus.

Supplices renes feriant habenis,
 Ictibus crebris domitent reatus,
 Annuat votis Deus ut petitis
 Virgine natus.

Sires and sons, a mingled band,
 Raise the hymn, and sing the hand
 That dealt such blessings round the land;
 Ye tender virgins, join.

Piety, from heaven descends,
 Vice her deadly power suspends,
 And royal rage its progress ends,
 Where peace erects her shrine.

Her day-star lights our plains once more,
 And exiled bands from every shore,
 Again her guiding hand adore,
 And meet her dawning morn.

Let ev'ry scourge, by every sage,
 Be ply'd to punish lawless rage,
 And with incessant vows engage
 The god of virgin born.

The destruction of the family of Ezzelino, and the death of Alberico, are related by a messenger, who minutely describes the manner in which the latter was killed. The Chorus, moralizing, conclude the piece.

THE dramatic fate of Ezzelino offers an wholesome lesson to sanguinary tyrants. A few years after his death ⁶, a native of the state over which he had reigned with despotic sway, ventured, with impunity, to introduce him upon the public stage, boasting his descent from a demon, and presenting the darkest side of his character to an audience of his own subjects! "Tragedie," says Sir Philip Sidney, "openeth the greatest wounds, and sheweth forth the ulcers that are covered with tissue, making tyrants manifest their tyrannical humours ⁷." If this be the right use of tragedy, (as Sir Philip asserts it is) Muffato merited the laurel crown.

As the reader (if he has followed me through the foregoing analysis) must have formed his judgment of this extraordinary drama, I shall proceed to the

⁶ " Nel 1260 notevol battaglia succedette tra i re di Boemia, e d' Ungheria, Aszelino di Romano, crudele et famoso tiranno in Lombardia, fu ucciso." *Ammirato, Ist. Fior.* | 1600, p. 87. Muffato was born (1261) the year after this event, and his *Reccrinnis* was, I believe, one of his earliest productions. | ⁷ *Def. of Poesie.*

ACHILLEIS.

This piece also consists of five acts, each of which is limited to a single scene. The dramatis personæ are,

HECUBA.**ACHILLES.****PRIAMUS.****AGAMEMNON.****PARIS.****MENELAUS.****CASSANDRA.****CALCHAS.****NUNCIUS.****SATELLES PARIDIS.****CHORUS TROIANORUM.****CHORUS GRÆCORUM.**

In *Act III.* Cassandra, as usual, raves.

Quis me ad penates concitam furor trahit ?
 Ad quod vocamur carmen ? aut quonam meum
 Mittam furorem ? Phœbus ad matrem vocat.
 Non fugere poteris Theſſalas nate faces.
 Retenta poſſet claſſis, hoc hoſtis tamen
 Negabit hoſti, conjugem conjux hîbet,
 In te redibit ira, dum fratrem petes,

CASSANDRA,

What demon leads me to theſe inner rooms ?
 What concert am I call'd to ? What dire end
 Awaits this fury ? See the God of day
 Invites me to my mother ? Hapleſs child,
 Theſſalea's flaming piles await thy guilt.
 Thy ſleet may yet be kept within the port, &c.

*

ALBERTINO MUSSATO was born (1261) in Padua. While still a youth, his father died, and left him, destitute of fortune, at the head of a numerous family. It is to the latter circumstance he alludes, in his pathetic elegy on his birth-day, when he says,

Quam fierem pubes, sic pater ante fui.

Not yet a man, a father's cares I knew.

Having no other means of subsistence, he was content to engage in the humble office of transcribing books for the students of the university of his native city; and he is said to have continued to exercise this employment, so irksome to a man of genius, till he reached his thirty-fifth year*. He occasionally, however, found time to attend the lectures delivered in the university; and in the privacy of his humble abode, he studied the science of the laws, cultivated elegant literature, and revolved in his active mind the interests of his country. Emerging, at length, from obscurity, he assumed the profession of a lawyer. Naturally eloquent, he soon attracted notice. His fame expanded, his fortune improv-

* In the time of Mussato, the reputation of the various professors in this university, attracted annually so many strangers, that more than five hundred houses were requisite for their accommodation. Vide *Stor. della Lett. Ital.* t. v, p. 50. *Hist. du*

Nov. Padue, lib. i, c. 32. As the art of printing was not then invented, a copyist must have found much occupation among so many students; and as the passion for letters was now acquiring strength, the scriptorium was often liberally endowed.

berinis" were made a pretext for bestowing upon him the laurel crown ; and the bishop of Padua, at whose hands he received it, issued, at the same time, an edict, that, on every christmas-day, the doctors, regents, and professors of the two colleges in that city, should go to his house in solemn procession, with wax-tapers in their hands and offer him a triple crown. Conciliated by this flattering distinction, he again engaged, with ardour, in the service of his country, and continued to render it many important offices. But neither his oratorical powers, nor political talents, could save it from falling under the dominion of Can Grande. Before this event took place, he had been banished (1325) on an unjust accusation, to Ghiozza, a little city, built on an island, amongst the lagunes or fens of Venice. On the promulgation of a general pardon by Can on his taking possession of Padua in 1328, the hoary exile quitted his retreat, and threw himself at the feet of the conqueror. But through the ill offices of Masiglio da Carrara, he was denied the benefit of the promised pardon, and remanded to Ghiozza. Here, while the venerable patriot beguiled his time in revising his historical works, fancy may suppose him occasionally turning a tearful eye to his native Padua, or, extending his view over that city to the towering boundary of the Alps, and losing himself, in imagination,

among the rocks and the forests, the snows and the torrents, of those majestic mountains. Muffato languished about one year in this city. On the 31st of May 1330, he died, in the seventieth year of his age, and his body was conveyed to Padua, where it was honourably interred.

Besides the tragedies which recommend Muffato to our notice, he wrote an historical work in sixteen books, entitled, "Augusta," containing the life and actions of the emperor Henry VII; and he detailed, both in prose and in verse, all the wars and remarkable occurrences of his own time. He also undertook a life of Lewis of Bavaria, which he continued until he was interrupted by the stroke of death. And he sometimes beguiled his leisure in the composition of Eclogues and Elegies. His "Eccerinis" and historical productions were published by Maratori, in "*Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*," vol. 10. And a complete collection of his works appeared in Venice, in 1636. It is the opinion of Maffei, that Muffato may dispute with Petrarca, the honour of having restored the elegance of the Latin tongue¹.

¹ *Test. Ital. tom. i, p. 2. Ven. 1746.* The words of Maffei are equally honourable to Muffato, and respectful to Petrarca. "Ad Albertin Muffato, forse per essere così tardi venute in luce, e da pochi osservate l'opere sue, poca giustizia il mendo letterario finora ha reso; cl-

sendo che accordasi in una voce l'Europa tutta, che si debba al Petrarca la gloria dell'aver risuscitata l'eleganza delle Latine lettere, e singolarmente nella Poesia: ma senza intendere di derogar punto alla fama di quel divino ingegno, fiam lecito dire, che tal gloria può gran-

This attempt of Muffato roused the dramatic Muses from their long slumber, and his tragedies were soon followed by several comedies and tragedies in the same language. Some of these we shall briefly notice, without a scrupulous regard to chronological order.

Leonardo Bruni of Arezzo, who died at an advanced age in 1444, wrote a comedy, entitled "Polixena," which was printed several times at Leipzig in the beginning of the sixteenth century.

Leo Battista Alberti, equally celebrated as a painter, a sculptor, and an architect, was also a comic poet. "Nature, sometimes, in a sportive mood," says M. Tenhove, "makes a prodigal display of all her powers, and unites her rarest and most precious gifts in a single individual." Such was Alberti². This extraordinary man wrote (1418), in the twentieth year of his age³, a comedy, called "Philodoxeos," which he undertook with a view to beguiling the languor of convalescence, and diverting the painful recollection of the unkind and unmerited neglect of his own

demente essergli dal Muffato contestata." Sir John Harrington is, I believe, the first English writer by whom Muffato is mentioned; he has been since noticed by Dr. War-ton in *Essay on Pope*, Lond. 1782, vol. i, p. 194.

² *Mem. of the House of Medici*, vol. i, p. 364. See also *Mem. of Ang. Polit. &c.* by Rev. W. P. Grefwell, p. 21, in which Alberti's

character, fully, ably, and elegantly drawn by Politiano, is given.

³ His age is modestly declared in the prologue, "Non quidem cupio, non peto in laudem trahi, quod hac vigesima annorum meorum ætate hanc ineptius scripserim fabulam." Tiraboschi mentions a MS. copy of this comedy in the Vatican, amongst the MSS. del March. Capporinum.

family⁴. This piece, on its first appearance, he handed about amongst his friends, as the production of Lepidus, an ancient Roman poet; but he soon after avowed it in a dedication to a revised copy which he presented to Leonello da Este, marquis of Ferrara, one of the most munificent patrons of literature of that age⁵. This copy, it may be presumed, never found its way to the press: for, deceived by the purity of the latinity, and the artful disguise under which the name of the real author was, for some time, concealed, the younger Aldus printed it from a manuscript, in 1588, as a precious remnant of antiquity, under the title of "*Lepidi comici veteris Fabula*."⁶ "It first appeared about the year 1425," says Mr. Roscoe, "when the rage for ancient manu-

⁴ In ea quoque ægritudine suos perpeffus est affines non pios, neque humanos; idcirco consolandi fui gratia, intermiffus jurium studiis, intercurandum, et convalefcendum fcripfit *Philadæmon* fabulam annos natus non plus viginti, &c. *Leon. Bapt. de Albertis Vita in eod. i. claff. 21. MSS. Bib. Magliab. Flor.*

⁵ "Leonello," fays Mr. Shepherd, "was the favourite theme of the applaufe of the learned. He not only encouraged the ardour, but participated in the ftudies of the cultivators of the liberal arts. Under the auspices of Guarino Veronefe, he had acquired a profound knowledge of claffical literature, which enabled him accurately to appreciate the merits of the candidates for literary fame." *Life of Pog. Bracciol. Liverp. 1802, p. 373.*

Giraldi feems to infinuate, that in cultivating letters, Leonello rather ftudied his intereft than indulged his inclination. "Ma benchè egli fi foffe volto a fofternere il pefo dello ftato, non levò però mai l'animo da gli ftudi delle lettere. Perciò ch'egli vedeva, che gli honorati ftudi delle fcienze apportano molto lume allo fplendore dell' imperio." *Comm. delle cofe di Ferr. Fior. 1556, p. 109.*

⁶ Mazzuchelli fays that the deceit was firft difcovered by Giovanni Alberti, bifhop of Cortona, who found it, fays he, "netato da Leonbatifta in fuo libro." The fecret was communicated by Giovanni to Valori, who published it in *Ellog.* p. 51. See alfo *Term. di menao rilliroo, &c. di Gafp. Valori, p. 16.*

scripts was at its height ; and Lepidus for a while took his rank with Plautus and with Terence ?." This, I believe, was the only dramatic essay of Alberti ; but he was author of several other poetical effusions, which are yet preserved in different libraries of Italy. He is said by Vasari to be the first who made an attempt at reconciling the measure of the Latin distich with the genius of his native language. Of this Vasari has preserved the following specimen :

Questa per estrema miserabile pistola mando
A te, che spregi miseramente noi *.

As the " Philodoxeos" is extremely rare, it will, perhaps, be gratifying to know that several extracts from it may be found in the " Margarita Poetica" of Alberto da Eyb, who erroneously calls the author Carlo Aretino.

In the same work of Eyb, mention is made of another Latin comedy of this period, entitled, " De falso hypocrita et tristi," by Marcello Ronzio of Vercelli.

Ugolino Pisani of Parma wrote several Latin comedies, in which he is allowed to have imitat-

* *Life of Lorenz. de Med. vol. i.*
p. 87, 4to.

* *Tom. ii, p. 238, Fir. 1771.* The editor of this edition of Vasari, says, " Questa nuova maniera di poetare Italiana fu abbracciata, e

promossa molto tempo dopo da Claudio Tolomei famoso letterato Sanese, ma trovò più derisori, che seguaci." Tolomei is mentioned with respect in the epilogue to the *Orbace* of Giraldi.

ed, with great felicity, the style of Plautus⁹. One of these, which turns on the humble subject of culinary affairs, he dedicated to Leonello d' Este, who succeeded to the marquifate of Ferrara in 1441. Another comedy in prose, entitled "Philogenia," still remains in MS. in the Vatican, in the biblioteca Estense, and in the royal library of Paris. And Sig. Signorelli saw another of Pisani's comic productions, bearing the title of "Ephigenia," in the royal library of Parma. Of this piece he has favoured us with the argument, which it may gratify the learned reader to find detailed below¹. From an oration in praise of Pisani, recited in the year 1437, it appears that he was a poet, a philosopher, a lawyer, an historian, and a musician².

Secco Polentone, chancellor of Padua, wrote, about the year 1450, a comedy in pure Latin prose, on the model of the *TABERNARIA* of the ancients, entitled "*Lusus ebriorum*." This extraordinary production, which still remains in-

⁹ Valeroso imitatore delle stile Plautino. *De Politia*, lit. p. 60.

¹ Ephigeniam cum amaret Ephebus perditæ, suavis, et precibus eam noctu tandem domo adduxit, et clam parentibus, quamquam quæreretur tota urbe, ad Euphonium traducta est, porro ad alium ut lateret; hoc ubi vidit Ephebus Ephigeniam apud se esse non posse diutius, hanc pro virgine dat Gobio uxorem.

² Ludewig, *Reliq. manuscr. t. 5, lib. 2*. To the tragic writers of this

age, I should, perhaps, add the name of Antonio Beccatelli of Palermo, author of the *Hermaphroditus*, a collection of epigrams, which, on account of the rankness of the obscenity that disgraces them, were solemnly censured by the diet of Ferrara in 1439. In the list of his works, *tragedies* are enumerated; but as I am not only unacquainted with the respective merits, but even with the titles of these pieces, this slight indication will, I trust, be accepted by

edited³, is known to the Italian reader by the version of his son Modesto, which was printed at Trent in 1482, under the title of "Catinia," (from Catinio, a dealer in earthen vessels) the principal personage of the drama. The scene is laid in a tavern, and the dialogue such as might be supposed to pass amongst men in a state of inebriation. The names of the interlocutors appear in the following rude verses prefixed to the Italian version :

O vui che questa opera lezete
In el vulgar como vui vedete,

the reader. Of Beccatelli an account may be found in Mr. Shepherd's *Life of Poggio Bracciolini*, chap. 8. It is deserving of remark, that the drama was cultivated in Sicily above two centuries before the time of Beccatelli, by William of Blois, who was preferred to an abbacy in that kingdom. Honourable mention is made of his "*Comedia et Tragedie*," by his brother Peter, the coadjutor of Gualterus, archbishop of Palermo, who had been sent by Henry II, of England, to instruct William king of Sicily in literature. *Warton, Hist. of Eng. Poet. diss. 2.*

³ Perhaps the only copy extant of the original of this comedy, was seen by Apostolo Zeno, "in manoscritta in quarto fra i codici del Senatore Jacopo Soranzo." But he was so fortunate as to possess an edition of the Italian version, unnoticed, he says, by any of the analysts of typography. This edition, he continues, "è stampata in quarto, e l'anno senza stampatore vi si legge nel fine: IN TRENTO. POST TNEBRAS SPERO LUCEM. M.CCCC.LXXXII, DIE XXVIII. MARCII,"

Elog. It. tom. 1, p. 358. It has been often matter of regret to me, in the course of this work, that I had not an opportunity of inspecting the dramatic library of Zeno. "In the year 1741," says Baretti, "I saw in Venice a collection of old Italian tragedies and comedies, made by the learned poet and antiquarian Ap. Zeno, to the number, as he assured me, of about four thousand. He had the best Italian library, perhaps, in the world; and I was lately told, that he left it at his death to the Gesuati, an order of monks residing in Venice, where I suppose the comedies are still kept united." *It. Lib. p. 118.* This information, which I believe to be perfectly correct, led me to I. Gesuati; but as the librarian was absent, I could not get access to the library. In *Fareff. Ill. della città di Ven.—Ven. 1784, p. 317*, it is said, that to the "ricca libreria" of this convent, the "scelta e copiosa biblioteca" of A. Zeno has been added. Unfortunately I could not repeat my visit to this valuable collection.

De litteral fermone qui traduta ;
 Vedete Catinio e l'opra tuta.
 Bibio cum Cetio vigilante,
 E Lanio homo simigliante ;
 E sopra al tuto Questio ceretano ;
 El qual con lo suo dir soprano,
 Fa Catinio esser legato in tuto.

There are no divisions of acts or scenes ; but the breaks in the action and in the dialogue are indicated by invitations to drink, eat, &c. *bevemo, mangemo, &c.* In a kind of prologue, the author declares that his object in writing this comedy was to expose the folly of men in devoting themselves to drinking, eating, and sensual pleasures of all kinds. The Italian version of this piece is said to be the first prose comedy in the lingua volgare.

Secco Polentone, or, as the writers of his time call him, Sico or Xicus Polentonus, to which they sometimes add the surname of Ricci, was born in Padua, where he enjoyed the eminent advantage of receiving his education under the celebrated Giovanni da Ravenna, the friend, and, for fifteen years, the amanuensis of Petrarcha. His talents and his learning early recommended him to some of the principal offices of the state, and he at length rose to the elevated situation of chancellor ; a situation for which he proved himself highly qualified, by

his Digest of the civil code of his native city. From a letter addressed by him to Niccolo Niccoli, it appears that he was present in 1414 at the discovery of the remains of Livy. Of his numerous writings, none, I believe, have seen the light, but the comedy we have noticed, and a life of Petrarca, edited by Tommasini. As he must have learned from Giovanni da Ravenna many particulars of the mode of study, and other domestic habits, of Petrarca, and as he had seen and known his children and his grandchildren, it might be expected that his biographical details of the bard of Vacluse would have been minute and interesting. However, we find he did little more than cite the memoirs formerly published by Pier Paolo Vergerio, and subjoin a few unimportant notices⁴. It is supposed that this biographical sketch was merely intended to constitute a part of a large work, addressed to his son, entitled, "De illustribus linguæ Latinæ scriptoribus." Of this work, which still remains inedited, there are two copies extant, one in the Ambrosian library, the other in the Ricardi collection. Secco died in 1463.

But the most celebrated Latin drama of this period, is the "Progne" of Gregorio Corrarò⁵, ne-

⁴ Tiraboschi, tom. vi, p. 784. Mem. pour la Vie du Petrarque, tom. I, p. 12.

⁵ In Latino elegantissima, e maravigliosa fu la *Progne*, tragedia stampata senza nome nel susseguente secolo.

phew of Gregory XII. It was admired, says Lelio G. Giraldi, by the learned of the sixteenth century. And in our time, it has been honoured with the most exalted praise by the marquis Maffei, who bestows on its latinity the epithets of "elegantissima" and "maravigliosa." But when we consider the age in which this tragedy was written, the praise of Giraldi and of Maffei will cease to appear extravagant. It is rich in poetic beauties. In the conduct of the fable, we find little to blame, except, perhaps, a slight violation of the unity of place; and although some of the speeches are too '*long drawn out*,' the dialogue is seldom languid⁶. The shade of Diomedes, which opens the piece, does, indeed, bring '*blasts from hell*.' Wherever he treads, his foot leaves an impression, the flowers wither, and the verdure of the meadows suddenly disappear. Without detailing the argument of the piece, he darkly alludes to the approaching horrors; and while he speaks, he feels the scourge of the furies; and an invisible hand drags him to hell⁷. In the inter-

ma che fu opera di Gregorio Cerzaro, ancor giovanetto. *Test. It. difesa*, p. 4, Ven. 1746. In the edition of the *Teatro Italiano*, printed at Verona, 1723, this passage does not appear. Probably the *Progne* had not then met the observation of the editor.

⁶ An acute critic has, however, discovered other faults in this drama. Some poets, he says, "senza alcun riguardo han posto sulle scene

azioni e sciagure di protagonisti empj, che nè possono muover compassione, nè giovar col terrore; perchè di quella sono indegni, e questo si rende inutile al più della gente, che non è sì scelerata. Tali mancamenti si veggono nella *Progne* del Domenichi." *Parag. della poet. trag. d' Italia con quella di Francia*. Zurig. 1732, p. 100. See also p. 46.

⁷ It will, perhaps, be thought, that the shade of Diomedes should

view between Progne and Philomela, the author improves on the meeting between Orestes and his sister, in the "Electra" of Euripides, and borrows largely from Ovid⁸. The silence of the unfortunate Philomela is rendered affecting and expressive, by the inquiries of Progne into the cause. The description of her former charms exhibits a picture of exquisite beauty; but the allusion to the state of her feet is disgusting:

Et come i bianchi, e delicati piedi,
Di così grave puzzo hor lerci sono ?

The verses in praise of Bacchus, beginning

Tornaro i sacri dì, &c.

breathe, even in a translation, the genuine dithyrambic spirit: and the vivid picture of the happy life of a peasant, in the fourth ode, is a relief to the mind of the reader, then harrowed with horrors. In making the stables of Diomedes the

save the Italian stage from the censure which I have elsewhere (*Hist. Mem. on Ital. trag.* p. 110) passed upon its ghosts; but I cannot admit that it should. Is it not matter of equal regret and surprise, that so admirable an example should have hardly found, in the two succeeding centuries, one happy imitator? Yet the powers certainly were not wanting. *Append. No. iv.*

⁸ *Adtamp.* l. 6, *fab.* 7.

⁹ Riccioboni, after observing that

this passage was imitated from Euripides, honestly confesses, that the author, "a bien outré la pensée du Grec." *tom. i, pref.* Shakespeare, who has exercised his talents upon the same subject, never disgusts. All the observations of Marcus on first discovering the mangled and mutilated form of Lavinia, are delicately expressed, and admirably calculated to excite pity. *Titus Andron.* act. 2, *sc.* 10.

scene of the murder of Itys; Corrarò evinces much judgment; and in the description of those stables, and of the supernatural noises with which they resound, he displays great powers in exciting terror.

Nel più riposto, e soletario lato
 Del palagio real siede una stalla,
 La dove Diomede, empio tiranno,
 Di propria man pascea d'humana carne,
 I dispietati e fieri suoi cavalli;
 Poi le teste de' gli huomini anchor molli
 Di sangue, sospendeva a le tremende
 Porte stillanti ogn'hor marcia, e spavento:
 Fin che'l signor di sì feroce albergo
 De la sua crudeltà portò la pena,
 E giustamente anch'ei cadde, e morio.
 Quivi tutta la notte ombre vaganti
 Piangono in mesta, e dolorosa voce:
 Et strepito, e romor sempre vi s'ode:
 Et strascinar di ceppi, e di catene.
 Dicefi, ch' ad ogn'hor tigri, e leoni
 S'odon quivi ruggire: e la spelunca
 Spesso d'urlo crudei stride, e risona:
 Trema la terra; e le tre furie accese
 Vibran di funeral fuoco le faci.
 Et spesse volte la insepolta turba
 L'alma del re crudel aserza, et percuote.

Where the proud palace o'er the desert view
 Looks in lone majesty; a stall is seen,
 Where the stern tyrant, with unfeeling hand,
 Parted his human hecatombs of old,
 In mangled portions, to his cruel steeds,

Loud neighing, raging for the dire repast ;
 Where many a gory head was hung aloft
 On the tremendous portal, blood-besmeared ;
 Till the ferocious tyrant felt the stroke
 He' oft inflicted ; and, in hideous pangs,
 Breath'd his fell spirit in the face of heaven.
 Ghosts here, the live-long night, in shadowy bands
 Roam wailing, and the harmony of death
 At times ascending, in the pausing gale,
 Rings round the ghastly choirs, with the loud clank
 Of chains, commingled, as their dreadful dance
 They measure on the moon-beam. While to swell
 The concert, loud is heard the tawny lord
 That makes the forest tremble with his roar,
 Responsive to the pards infuriate yell.
 The formidable diapason fills
 The cavern'd gloom within, and rolls around
 The roof, like breaking thunder. The firm floor,
 With tremulous vibration, seems to quake,
 As rising slow, the sisterhood of hell
 Flecker the face of night with dismal rays
 From their funereal torches, waving round ;
 And oft th' unbodied multitude, deny'd
 The tomb's asylum, with vindictive rage,
 'Round their assassin throng, and plague for plague,
 With retribution due, alternate pay.

*

The violation of the unity of place to which I
 have alluded, is in the fourth act¹, where Progne
 and her female train, dressed as Bacchantes, ap-

¹ Domenichi's *Progne* is not divid-
 ed into acts; but as the choruses
 seem intended to mark a regular di-
 vision of the drama, I suppose the re-

sumption of the action immediately
 after the third ode, to be the pur-
 posed commencement of the fourth
 act.

pear before the prison of Philomela in a deep wood. The reader need not be told, that the fable of this drama was drawn from Ovid. The story of Philomela, which is related by Pope in a note on the nineteenth *Odyssey*, is totally different, and by no means so well calculated for dramatic representation; but it affords a more poetical reason for the plaintive song of the nightingale².

Abundant as the beauties of this piece are, it remained inedited almost a century after the death of Corraro. The original manuscript, without any indication of the writer, accidentally falling into the hands of Giovanni Ricci, a lawyer and academician of Venice, he was struck with the beauty of the composition, and published it, anonymously, in 1558³. From his ignorance or uncertainty in regard to the author, and from the simple and regular construction of the fable, and the pureness of the latinity, he was almost induced to suppose it the production of an early writer; and accordingly boldly asserted in his de-

² This appears to have been the opinion of Virgil; and therefore the celebrated simile in *Georg. lib. iv. l. 511*, alludes to the Greek tale. Horace clearly follows Ovid's story, which, however, is an historical fact that the poet has only embellished, and made the subject of a metamorphosis. Progne and Philomela were introduced upon the Athenian stage under the form of birds, by Aristophanes. Vid. his comedy, en-

titled, *The Birds*. It was probably the fear that this preposterous example might find imitators upon the Roman stage, that drew from Horace the following caution: "Nec in avem Progne vertatur." *De Art. Poet. l. 187*.

³ It was printed in quarto under the direction of Paolo Manuzio, at the press of the Venetian academy, entitled, *La Fama*.

dedication to the Spanish ambassador, then resident at Venice, that "antiquis, quæ maximè laudantur, certè parem." But the name of the real author was soon after discovered, and publicly announced. This drama had not been many years in the possession of the public, when Lodovico Domenichi translated it into Italian blank verse ⁴, with great elegance and fidelity, but basely published it as his own production, calling it, in his dedication to Giannotto Castiglione, "la mia Progne ⁵."

This tragedy is a splendid instance of the precocity of Italian genius; it was the production of Gregorio in the eighteenth year of his age! And it appears from his other works, that time matured the talents with which he had been so liberally endowed. Yet, although his connexion with the head of the church opened his way to ecclesiastical honours and emoluments, we do not find he advanced in that lucrative career with the rapidity which might be expected. While he was prothonotary of the apostolic see, his patriotic pride

⁴ *La Progne, Trag. di Lod. Domenichi. In Fir. presso i Giunti, 1561, in 8vo.* Before either the original or the translation of Corraro's drama had seen the light, a tragedy on the same subject appeared in *Ven. 1548*, by Giralomo Parabosco, a celebrated poet and musician of Piacenza. *Vid. Crescim. t. v, p. 75.* Allacci, who had, probably, never seen Domenichi's drama, calls it a comedy. *Dram. p. 648, Ven. 1755.*

⁵ Ap. Zeno loses all patience when he mentions this circumstance,

"Che il Domenichi, uomo per tante opere da lui date fuori, tradotte e scritte, famoso, e niente bisognoso di arrogarsi le altrui; sia da riporsi nel numero de *plagiari*, duro sembrerà a crederli e strano: e pure il fatto con la presente tragedia lo manifesta, e 'l condanna." *Bib. della El. Ital. t. i, p. 473.* It was through the medium of this translation that all my knowledge of this piece was acquired; for as yet the original has eluded my researches.

was wounded by Poggio Bracciolini's description of the Venetian nobles, in his "Dialogue on Nobility." This occasioned some severe animadversions on the part of Gregorio, to which Poggio mildly replied. Gregorio died patriarch of Venice in 1464⁶.

Bernardo Campagni of Verona, another poet of this age, wrote a tragedy in iambic verse on the passion of Christ, under the title of "La Pantea :

cujus Jesus

Est patiens tragicè numeris ploratus amaris."

It opens thus :

Dolor trementi cor mihi frangens ferus.

And concludes, "Ad nostra tutum tecta perducet gradum." It is dedicated, in elegiac verse, to Sixtus IV.

Though Bernardo probably experienced the protection of Sixtus, yet this crafty pontiff, whose mind seems to have been engrossed by political schemes of a most diabolical nature, does not appear to have bestowed much attention on the promotion of the drama⁷. But in his nephew

⁶ Tiraboschi, vi, p. 891. *Bibliot. della Elog. Ital.* i, p. 474. *Life of Pog. Bracciolini*, p. 364.

⁷ Il n'y eut point de Théâtres en Italie avant la fin du quinzième siècle. Le cardinal Camerlingue Riari, neveu du Pape Sixte IV. avoit tenté d'inspirer à ce souverain pontife du

goût pour ces beaux établissemens, mais Sixte reçut avec assez de froideur quelques spectacles ingénieux que Riari lui avoit donnés sur un théâtre mobile dans le château Saint-Ange. *Trait. hist. sur de la Danse*, t. ii, p. 71.

Cardinal Riario, it found a zealous friend. It is, however, to be lamented, that Riario should have entertained the mistaken idea which prevailed in his time, in regard to the powers of the *lingua volgare*; and, accordingly, deeming it unfit for the stage, extended his encouragement, exclusively, to the composition of dramas in Latin, or to the representation of the comedies of Plautus and Terence in the original language. This contempt of the Italian language, or predilection for the Latin tongue, and the productions of the Roman stage, served rather to check than promote the progress of an art of which Riario was a passionate admirer.

Sulpitius*, in the dedication to his Commentary on Vitruvius, attributes to this accomplished prelate the invention of painted scenes, and tells him that the people of Rome look up to him for the establishment of a regular theatre. From the same dedication, we learn that a musical drama (probably a species of oratorio), founded upon the conversion of St. Paul, had been represented, (1480) under the auspices of Riario, upon a moveable stage, five feet high, and elegantly or-

* Sulpitius was a professor of Belles Lettres in Rome during the pontificate of Innocent VIII. To Ugolino of Parma, who flourished at the same time, the drama has obligations: he was, says Quadrio, a "compositore e recitator di comedie." v. p. 58. Of Ugolino little more seems to be known than what Quadrio relates. Nor are we better acquainted with the personal history of Beverini, the favourite composer of dramatic music of the same period.

namented, in one of the public squares in Rome. This, according to Sulpitius, was the first attempt at musical declamation since the revival of letters⁹; and, according to Bayle and father Menestrier¹, gave birth to the opera, or melodrama; an opinion refuted by the learned historian of music². As Sulpitius, to whom this drama is ascribed, and by whom the first attempt at reviving the *costume* of the Greek stage seems to have been made, was more distinguished for the depth of his learning than the brilliancy of his genius, we have, perhaps, little reason to regret the loss of this effusion of his pen; but as the music was the composition of Francesco Beverini, a celebrated composer of the day, we must lament that it has not passed down to us. The commentator proceeds to praise his patron for the frequency of his theatrical exhibitions, often in his own palace, and sometimes in public squares, for the amusement of the clergy in particular,

* When Sulpitius made this assertion, he seems to have forgotten that the sacred dramas before his time, afforded frequent instances of musical declamation. However, his claim to the honour of reviving the *costume* of the Greek stage cannot be justly denied.

¹ *Hist. de la Mus.* tom. i, p. 241, and *Menestrier, sur les rep. en Mus.*

² *Burney, Hist. of Music*, vol. iv, ch. 2. M. le Grande seems to refer the origin of the opera to the *Fabliaux* ou *Contes* of the Normans of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. In a preface to *Aucassin et Nicolette*, a

dramatic tale of this period, he says, "J'ai annoncé déjà que ce fabliau est mêlé alternativement de vers et de prose; particularité d'autant plus remarquable que tous les autres sont entièrement rimés. Cette prose forme le corps de la narration où de l'histoire, et se déclamaient. Les morceaux en vers qui la coupent d'espace en espace, étaient chantés, à peu-près comme les arriettes dans nos opéras-comiques." tom. iii, p. 30. Here we discover the elements of the comic-opera, which, if it did not give birth to, certainly preceded the melodrama.

and the people in general. He also applauds him for providing Pomponius Letus with a stage and scenery for the representation of the comedies of the ancient Latin poets, by his pupils. And he takes occasion to remind his patron, that even Innocent VIII. the turbulent and ambitious successor of his uncle, condescended to honour with his presence some of these exhibitions in the castle of S. Angelo³. Among the representations alluded to by Sulpitius, we may number that of "Constantius," which was presented before the pope and cardinals in the spacious square of S. Peter's, in the carnival of 1484. This, like all the other pieces which Riario patronized, was in Latin, with, probably, the exception of that part of the dialogue delivered by Constantine, which, it may be presumed, was written in Greek; for we find that the person chosen to personate that character was a Genoese, who, from a long residence at Constantinople, was supposed to be intimately acquainted with that language. This performer was distinguished ever after by the title of *The Emperor*⁴.

³ I shall transcribe the whole passage: "Tu enim primus tragœdiæ quam nos juventutem excitandi gratia et agere et cantare primi hoc ævo docuimus (nam ejusmodi actionem jam multis sæculis Roma non viderat) in medio foro pulpitem ad quinque pedum altitudinem erectum pulcherrimè exornasti. Eandemque postquam in Hadriani mole, Divo Innocentio spectante, est acta, rursus intra

tuos penates tanquam in medio circi cavea, toto confesso umbraculis tecto, admisso populo, et pluribus tui ordinis spectatoribus honorificè accepisti. Tu etiam primus picturatae scenæ faciem, quàm Pomponiani comœdiam agerent nostro sæculo ostendisti; quare à te theatrum novum tota urbs magnis votis expectat."

⁴ Bacchanalian die, qui carnisspivium nuncupatur, acta est. *Historia*

It may serve to reconcile to probability our conjecture in regard to the language which we have assigned to the part of Constantine, to observe that, amongst the classical exhibitions at this period, we find mention of the productions of the Greek tragedians in their original language. Politiano has thus celebrated, in some Greek verses, the performance of *Alessandra Scala* in the character of *Electra*, in the tragedy of that name by Sophocles, at a public representation of that piece in Florence.

TO ALESSANDRA SCALA.

Electra's griefs, when *Alessandra* feigns,
So well the maid a virgin's part sustains,
Athenian accents from a Tuscan tongue,
With added sweetness charm the listening throng.—
What dignity, what grace, our souls engage !
Thus would *Electra's* self have trod the stage !
Each look, each gesture, nature's semblance wears,
And nature pleads in her impassioned tears !
But when the fair, with love too well express'd,
Folds her *Orestes* to her heaving breast ;
How do I long to fill the envied place,
And wistful,—sigh to share that dear embrace !

GRESWELL.

“ *Alessandra*, the accomplished daughter of

Constantini Cesaris, in Pontificæ atrio, ubi cardinales in curiam venientes, ab equis descendunt pontifex è superioribus fenestris, latus spectavit. Huic scenæ præfatus erat Genuensis quidam Constantinopoli natus et educatus, et in pontificis familiam, ascitus. Hic quum Constantini personam sustineret, ex eo die Impera-

toris nomen accipiens, usque ad mortem secum illud siononymum detulit. *Rer. Ital. scrip. vol. xxxiii. Diar. di Jac. Velt. rano, p. 193.*

⁵ *Inter Gr. Eptgram. ju/d. M. Tenhove* observes, that Politiano's beautiful little poem of the *Violet* was also intended for this accomplished lady.

Bartolemeus Scala," says Mr. Grefwell, " was no less distinguished by her personal beauty, than her literary acquirements. This lady gave her hand to the Greek Marullus; and Politiano is numbered amongst her unsuccessful admirers⁶." Bred to the profession of arms, Marullus was a wandering soldier when he was arrested by the personal charms of Alessandra. He became first her lover, then her pupil, and, ultimately, by a natural transition, her husband. This lovely votary of the Muses was profoundly skilled in the Greek and Latin languages: the former she studied under Joannes Lascaris; the latter under Demetrius Chalcondyles. Some of her Greek epigrams still remain.

As an historian should omit nothing, however seemingly trivial, which may serve to illustrate his subject, I shall here take occasion to observe, that Vincenzo Martinelli not only subscribes to the opinion of Bayle and Menestrier in regard to the origin of the opera, but adds, that the fame of Sulpitius' drama having spread to Venice, the directors of the amusements of the carnival of 1480, in that gay city, introduced upon their stage a melo-drama, in imitation or emulation of the Conversion of St. Paul, intitled, " La Verità

⁶ *Mem. of Ang. Politianus, &c.* | mirer of the fair. " He had," says
Manch. 1801, p. 79. If Varillas' | this historian, " an ugly face, a huge,
 portrait of Politiano be faithful, he | big, and long nose, and his left eye
 was not likely to be a successful ad- | squinted." *B.* iv.

raminga," which, however, from his own account, appears to have been only a ludicrous farce. Truth being recognised by some lawyers, physicians, apothecaries, and ladies, and by a merchant who wishes to unburthen himself of his conscience as an unsaleable commodity, is abandoned by all. At length the Genius of the theatre (*la musa del teatro*) takes compassion on the solitary stranger, and offers to admit her to take a part in the representation, on the condition that she will be content to wear such a mask as she shall provide. To this Truth assents; and, changing her dress, her action, and her manners, a troop of buffoons invite her to join in a dance; and the spectacle concludes⁷. It does not appear in what language this little piece was written; perhaps in Latin, which usage had rendered familiar, at this period, upon the Italian stage.—But to proceed;

Carlo Verardo of Cesena, who had been successively secretary of briefs to Paul II, Sixtus IV, Innocent VIII, and Alessandro VI, rose into notice, as a dramatic writer, under the auspices of Cardinal Riario, in whose palace his "*Ferdinandus Servatus*," and "*Historia Boetica*," were first

⁷ *Lett. fam. e crit. Lond. 1758*, p. 353. Martinelli's authority for this fact was probably tradition; for I have been assured by one of his surviving friends, that he had read nothing on the subject of musical history, nor did he understand mu-

sic: all his knowledge came from traditions floating about Italy. Perhaps the traditional fact recorded by Martinelli, gave birth to the opera, intitled *La Verità raminga*, which appeared in Lucca, 1650.

represented on a stage erected for that purpose⁸. The idea of the first of these pieces originated in an attempt made by an assassin on the life of Ferdinand⁹, which was rendered unsuccessful by the timely interposition of St. James. Having constructed the plot, Carlo committed the composition of the dialogue to his nephew Marcellino, who, calling to mind the practice of the Roman stage, esteemed measure necessary, and embraced the hexameter, but omitted the division of acts and scenes. The interlocutors are, Pluto, Alecto, Tisiphone, Megara, Ruffo (the assassin), the King, Queen, Nurse, St. James, Cardinal Mendoza, and the Chorus. Pluto, in a monologue on the respective religions of Christ and Mahomet, mingles the names and deeds of Pirithous, Orestes, and Hercules. For this heterogeneous composition the author makes some amends, says Signorelli, by his observance of the unity of action, and the graces of his numbers. Of his style and descriptive powers, Mendoza's vivid picture of Ruffo, after the murderous attempt, may serve as a specimen :

Respondet tamquam penitus ratione careret ;
Nec dubium ratione caret, prenditque catenas

⁸ This we learn from the dedication to the first of those pieces to Cardinal Riario.

⁹ History is silent in regard to this attempt on the life of Ferdinand. According to Tiraboschi, Verardo's drama was written in the year in which it occurred.

Mordicus, et populo spectanti triste minatur.
 Res monströsa quidem. Capiti stant lumina terra,
 Terribilis facies premitur pallore nefando,
 Instuiturque solum semper non lumine recto :
 Lingua venena garrit : liveat rubigine dentes :
 Deformis macies, apparet corpore toto :
 Nusquam risus adest : suspiria semper abundant :
 Horrendumque caput redimitur crinibus atris :
 Inficit aspectu quicquid conspexit acerbo.

His answers were such ravings as we hear
 From moon-struck men ; and, sure his reason reel'd.
 He bit the galling chain, and menac'd fate
 To the surrounding throng. His orbs of fight
 Sent forth a sullen glare, and to his cheek
 The furies gave their ghastliness of mien,
 As, on the ground, with dull, malignant gaze,
 He look'd askance. His tongue was ever steep'd
 In deadly venom, and his teeth were ting'd
 With hateful rust. A fell anatomy
 He seem'd, with famine elung. No smile was seen
 Upon that hollow cheek to fit, but groans
 Incessant from his heaving breast were sent.
 His matted locks about his hideous head
 In snaky spires hung down. And his dire look
 Like a malignant planet, sent abroad
 A sympathetic horror through the croud.

*

This singular production is intitled, by the author, *TRAGI-COMEDY*, probably for the same reason that Plautus bestows that appellation on his "*Amphitrio*;" because it is of that mixed kind in which the highest, as well as the lowest,

characters are introduced. It is dedicated to one of the dramatis personæ, Pietro Mendoza, archbishop of Toledo, and primate of Spain. The earliest edition appeared in Rome in 1493, by *Magistrum Eucharium Silber, alias Franck*. Perhaps the revival of tragi-comedy may be referred to the first appearance of this drama.

The "Historia Boëtica" is founded upon the expulsion of the Moors from Granada, and is written entirely in prose, with the exception of the argument and prologue, which are in iambic verse. In the prologue the nature of the work is declared¹:

¹ Faciam ut conmixta sit tragicocomœdia

Nam me perpetuò facere, &c.

Prolog. ad Amp.

Our play shall have a proper mixture in it,

So shall it be a tragi-comedy.

For, as I think, it is not right in me

To make it wholly comedy, where kings

And gods are introduced. What then remains?

Why, since there is a slave in't plays a part,

I'll make it, as I said, a tragi-comedy.

Thornton.

After perusing this passage, the reader will, with surprise, hear Dryden assert, "there is no theatre in the world has any thing so absurd as the English tragi-comedy: it is a drama of our own invention, and the fashion of it is enough to proclaim it so." *Essay on Dram. Poes. p. 70. Prose Works, vol. ii. Lond. 1800. Ad-*

*dison, mislaid by Dryden, makes a similar remark: "Tragi-comedy," says he, "is the monstrous product of the English stage." Yet Sir Philip Sidney, in a work which it may be presumed those writers had read, declares, "I know the ancients have one or two examples of tragi-comedy, as Plautus hath Amphitruo." Def. of Poes. That tragi-comedy was cultivated by the ancients, there is abundant proof; and it will, I believe, hardly admit of a doubt, that it was revived by the modern Italians. When the *Ferdinandus servatus* appeared, this species of drama was equally unknown on the English, the French, and the Spanish stage; and so early as 1541, Luca Contile not only wrote, but defined a tragi-comedy. In the prologue to his *Pescara (Mil. 1550)*, he tells the audience, that "questa è un tragicommedia" and then proceeds to observe, that "la tragi-comedia (voi sapete) come nel principio ha gli atti suoi tranquilli, nel mezzo, contiene varie passioni, e diversi accidenti, nel fin bisogna che si riduca a*

Requirat autem nullus hic comœdæ
Leges ut observentur, aut tragœdiæ ;
Agenda nempe est Historia, non fabula.

Let none require the laws of Comedy
To be observed, much less of Tragedy ;
We only mean to act an HISTORY.

What the author promises, he gives ; for his drama is, in fact, a colloquial narrative, and may, perhaps, be considered as the prototype, at least in Italy, of that species of secular drama, intitled " Histories," by the early dramatic writers of England. The term, however, probably originated with the Rappresentazioni of the fifteenth century, several of which bear the title of *Istoria*. At the end of this piece we are told : "*Acta ludis Romanis, Innocentio VIII, in folio Petri sedente, an. a Nat. Salvatoris MCCCCXCII. undecimo kalendas Maii*." So that it was probably written while preparations were making in Rome to celebrate the event upon which it is founded. Verardo seems to have caught his subjects as they rose.

una comune è salda quiete." *La Cecaria* of A. Epicuro, which was printed at *Ven.* 1535, also bears the title of Tragi-comedia.

The claim of Luca Contile to our notice, is chiefly founded upon the circumstance which led to the mention of his name in this note ; for his dramatic productions are in little estimation. It is as a writer of sonnets he is best known. In this difficult species of poetry, he is thought to have approached very near, if he did not equal, Petrarca.

He was of an ancient, noble, but fallen, house, of Siena. His life was active, and mostly passed in courts. After the death of his patron, the marquis del Vasto, he retired to the isle of Ischia to indulge his sorrow, or perhaps his muse ; for the second part of his *Rime* is dated from this island ; " an island," says Mr. Swinburne, " which, for richness of soil, abundance of products, and beauty of situation, may vie with the most celebrated spots on the face of the globe."

To an edition of this drama, printed in the following year (1493), at Rome, is subjoined a ballata, with the accompanying music, which may be considered as one of the earliest instances of printed musical notation extant.

But one of the most extraordinary productions of this age still remains to be noticed. This is a Latin tragedy, by Laudivio, a knight of Jerusalem, founded upon the various vicissitudes in the life of Jacopo Piccinino, a famous condottiere, who was taken by surprise in 1464, and put to death the following year, by order of Ferdinand king of Naples. This drama, which, like the former, is dedicated to one of the dramatis personæ, Borso da Este, duke of Ferrara, is intitled “De Captivitate ducis Jacobi tragœdia².” It is divided into five acts, without the division of scenes. The names of the interlocutors are marked in the margin, and sometimes the argument of the scene is given. In the first act we read in the rubric, *Rex Borfius loquitur* (Duke Borso speaks); and we find him, accordingly,

² The Marquis Maffei, anxious to claim this drama, with all its imperfections, for his native Verona, says, that Muratori shewed him, among the MSS. Estensi, *Laudivii Veranensis Tragedia de Captivitate Jacobi ducis ad Borsum Marchionem*; se debba (he adds) *Veronensis lacerò ch' altri guidichi.*” *Ver. Illust. Ver.* 1733, fol. lib. iii. p. 186. It was so Tiraboschi first read it; but on a further inspection it appeared to be

Veranensis. My account of this tragedy is drawn from an extract communicated by Tiraboschi to Sig. Signorelli.

Of Laudivio little more seems to be known with certainty, than that he was a knight of Jerusalem. It is believed he was of the family of Zacchia of Vezzano. A letter from him to Cardinal Jacopo Ammanati appears amongst the letters of that cardinal, printed (1506) in Milan.

delivering a long soliloquy upon the valorous deeds of Piccinino ; then a priest enters, and recounts various dreadful prodigies. After some conversation between the priest and the duke, a chorus terminates the act. In the second act, an augur, the chorus, and a messenger, hold a kind of prophetic dialogue on the evils which are fated to follow the approaching compact. In the third act, the scene is shifted from Ferrara to Naples, where an ambassador from Piccinino to King Ferdinand announces the coming of the general, and the king promises to receive him graciously. This act is concluded by the chorus singing the praises of Drusiana, wife of Piccinino. In the fourth act, the king confers with the executioner on the expediency of putting Piccinino to death, so soon as he, relying on the faith of the treaty, should deliver himself into his hands. The executioner advises him to break his faith, and assassinate the general. In the next scene, Piccinino appears in prison. The executioner enters, and intimates the royal order for his execution :

DUX JAC.

En jam factus ades, meque petit.

SATEL.

Dux, martis auctor potens, bellis inclyte ;
 Piget, dicam, piget : tibi fero necem :
 Sic rex jubet, jam colla. tende gladiis.

PICCININO.

Lo ! this way comes a messenger of death,
My fate is in his hands.

EXECUTIONER.

Unhappy chief,
Favourite of Mars, in ranks of death renowned.
Alas ! my faltering tongue can scarce pronounce
My dreadful errand here. I bring you death,
The king so orders ;—to the ready sword
Submit your stately neck.

The general submits, and is beheaded. After
the executioner has done his office, he commi-
serates the hard fate of the brave commander :

*Quam graviter diram constant tulit necem.
Indolui huic tam duram sortem accidere.
Sed redeo ad regem ; jam perfectum est scelus.*

With what stern hardihood he bore the blow !
O how my spirit thrills at such a lot
Of such a man ! But I must to the king.—
The deed is done.

The act is concluded by Drusiana, and the cho-
rus, who join in lamenting the imprisonment of
Piccinino, of whose death they are ignorant. In
the fifth act, the scene is again shifted to Ferrara.
A messenger relates to Duke Borso the fate of the
general, and the piece concludes ³.

³ Muratori, *Ann.* vol. ix. p. 439. | the circumstances on which this
and, after him, Mr. Roscoe, relates | drama is founded. " Piccinino was

This drama remains inedited, amongst the MSS. Estensi: nor does the conduct of the fable, or the style, says Sig. Signorelli, excite a wish to see it imparted by the press. It is, however, he adds, "a tragedy," and has the extrinsic value of being one of the earliest founded upon a domestic fact.

Before we part with this extraordinary drama, and totally dismiss the "*Ferdinandus servatus*," we shall embrace this occasion to observe, that these two pieces, and the drama on the sack of Cessena, ascribed to Petrarca, afford the earliest instances we have met with of the introduction of living characters upon the Italian stage, in the manner of the Old Comedy. This liberty does not seem to have been often taken by succeeding poets. A few instances; however, occur, and these we shall briefly notice ⁴.

one of the most eminent condottieri of his time, and by his valour had acquired the absolute sovereignty of several towns in Italy, and raised himself to such consideration as to obtain in marriage, Drusiana, one of the daughters of the great Francesco Sforza, duke of Milan. Soon after his marriage, he was invited by Ferdinand, who had some secret cause of enmity against him, to pass a short time at Naples, whither he went, accompanied by his new bride, and fell an easy victim to the treachery of Ferdinand, who not being able to allege any plausible reason for this atrocious act, endeavoured to propagate a report that Piccinino had broken his neck by a fall from

the window of the place of his confinement." *Vol. i. p. 223.*

⁴ A living comic writer of Italy affords an instance in point, but rather too recent for my text. While the late Mr. Byers, the antiquario, and Andrea, a noted servitor di piazza, were still living, they were introduced under feigned names, upon the Roman stage, by G. G. de Rossi, in his *Calzolaio Inglese*. *Bass.* 1790. An incident in the history of the drama, not less deserving of notice, is mentioned by Frederick II of Prussia, in a letter to Algarotti, dated Potsdam, 9th February 1754. I have seen here, says he, one Menefolio, an Italian, who "travaille depuis trois ans à une comédie dont il est

Fontanini saw a MS. comedy by Cesare Cremonini of Cento, intitled "Le Nubi," written in imitation of Aristophanes's comedy of the same name, the principal object of which was to turn into ridicule Giorgio Ragasco, a professor of philosophy in the university of Padua, who was then (1590) living⁵. He also observes, that the "Configlio Villanesco Mascherato sopra tutte le Arti," printed at Siena in 1583, favours of the Old Comedy. It has, he says, two choruses, with the distinctive appellations of first and second chorus; and adds, that the dialogue consists of satirical remarks on the several arts, and their respective professors, that flourished in the time of the author. But it seems to have escaped the notice of this indefatigable bibliographer, that the "Mandragola" of Machiavelli, a comedy which unites the perfections of Terence and Plautus⁶, was written in express imitation of the Old Comedy⁷,

lui-même le sujet principal." Op. del Algarotti. Ven. 1794, tom. xv. p. 179.

⁵ *Avanti. def. cap. vii. p. 148.*

⁶ Algarotti, speaking of poets whose memories should be perpetuated in marble, says, "nell'altra nicchia si vuol porre il segretario fiorentino, autore anch'egli di componimenti di teatro; e segnatamente in quella comedia (the *Mandragola*) che fu recata in francese da Rousseau, si trova la eleganza del dire di Terenzio, e la forza comica di Plauto; e ci scommetterei che av rebbe mosso a riso l'istesso Orazio a cui non garbeggiano gran fatto i soli

Plantini." *Tom. ix. p. 41.* Rousseau, having read this comedy in his youth, found it, he says, so excellent, he could not resist the temptation of translating it; and adds, "Je me suis mille fois étonné qu'une comédie aussi ingénieusement imaginée, aussi théâtrale, aussi exacte, et aussi régulièrement conduite, n'en eût pas enchanté d'autres du même genre, et à peu près aussi parfaites." *Lett. à M. Riccoboni.*

⁷ This is the assertion of Jovius, who was probably acquainted with some of the characters who fell under the lash of the poet. His words

many of the characters being drawn after living personages, and wearing no other disguise but the thin veil of a feigned name. Descending to modern times, we find, that in "Le Revolte di Parnaso" of Scipione Herrico, printed at Messina 1625⁸, and in the "Maritaggio delle Muse" of Gio. Giacomo Riccio, which appeared in 1633, the author of each piece introduces his contemporary poets. In the title-page of Riccio's drama, it is declared, "*dove in cappriccioso intrecciamento sono interlocutori con le nove muse, i migliori poeti Toscani, e Latini, heroici, lirici, pastorali faceti, nel metro, e nello stile più da loro usato.*" And Herrico professes, in his dedication, to imitate Critipus and Aristophanes. But both Herrico and Riccio omit the chorus.

Returning from this digression, we shall pay a passing tribute to the memory of Pomponius Lætus, who, conjointly with Cardinal Riario, attempted

are, "Comiter æstimemus Etruscoresales, ad exemplar comediarum veteris Aristophanis, in Niciâ præsertim comediâ." If Congreve had evinced any intimacy with Italian literature, I should be tempted to suspect him of having drawn his Sir Paul Plyant after Messer Nicia of this comedy. The resemblance is certainly striking. As the *Mandragola* is not noticed either by Fontanini, or his annotator Zeno, I shall mention two editions of rare occurrence, in my collection, neither of which is registered by Allacci. *Roma a di xxvii. di Settembre nell' anno mdcxxiii. and Fior. MDL.* The year in which this

comedy was written is not ascertained; but it may be inferred from a passage in the *Clipia*, act. ii, sc. 3, that it was composed previous to that comedy, which is referred to 1506, on the authority of a conversation between Cleandro and Palamede, in act. sc. 1.

⁸ My copy of this comedy was printed at Rome, 1665, per Ang. Bernabo.

⁹ Ven. 1633. Besides the *Maritaggio delle Muse*, says Crescimbeni, tom. v, p. 164, Riccio published (1635), "*Diporti di Parnaso; lavoriti colla stessa diversità di stile.*"

to revive the Latin stage ; and then proceed to notice some of the dramas, as well sacred as secular, that appeared in the lingua volgare during the lurid interval between the revival of the drama in Italy, and the rise of Italian tragedy.

Pomponius Lætus, an illegitimate descendant of the rich and illustrious house of San Severino¹, was born in Calabria. The name which he received at baptism is not recorded² ; that by which he is now known, he assumed at Rome. Early removed to that city, he was placed under the care of Laurentius Valla, a famous professor of *belles lettres*, to whose chair he afterwards succeeded. While engaged in the instruction of the Roman youth, he instituted an academy for the study of antiquities. The enthusiastic zeal with which the object of this institution was pursued, excited suspicions of impiety against the members, and the academy fell under the heavy censure of the church. Stimulated by bigotry, or instigated by malicious insinuations, the reigning pontiff, Paul II, proceeded, by a transition not uncommon in that age, from censure to persecution. The papal rage being chiefly directed against Pomponius, as the founder, he thought it

¹ Varillas, in the coarse language of his translator, Mr. Spence, says, " Lætus was the brat of a country lass, whom the prince of Salerno had abused, under the wheedle of

marriage." *Secret Hist. of the House of Medicis*, Lond. 1686, p. 447.

² M. de la Monnoye says, his real Christian name was Julius; but his authority is questionable.

prudent to retire from Rome ; and he found, for a while, a safe and honourable asylum in the noble house of Cornaro of Venice. But, terrified by the threats of the angry pontiff, the Venetians, with a pusillanimity which disgraces their state, gave up Pomponius, and he was immediately dragged in chains to Rome, and stretched upon the rack. At length Paul died, the persecution ceased, and Pomponius resumed his public lectures and private studies. During the forty years that he filled the chair of Valla, he wrote and published several works on antiquarian and philological subjects ; and, with a view to the revival of the drama, an art he loved, he exercised his pupils in the recitation of the comedies of Plautus and Terence, on temporary stages raised in the palaces of the prelates, cardinals, and Roman nobility, and in the theatre erected by the munificence of his friend and patron Cardinal Riario. Pomponius thought, that in reviving or re-establishing the old stage, he advanced one step towards forming the new. He died in 1498, and his remains were attended to the grave by the family of the reigning pontiff (Alexander VI), clad in purple³.

³ Vid. *Elog. doct. viror.* xxx. in which many curious and interesting particulars of the public and private life of Lætus are related. Indeed the literary history of the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries, has deep obligations to Jovius.

Nor are the fine arts less obliged to him. *Vasari*, tom. vii, p. 213. M. Tenhove seems to treat him with too much severity. *Vol.* ii, p. 90. But Aretino, who knew him personally, and who, in a moment of wrath, is supposed to have written an epitaph

III. BUT though Latin was the language which prevailed on the secular stage of Italy during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, attempts were frequently made, even at a very early period, to amuse 'the million' with dramatic essays in the lingua volgare. It is true, the "Ameto" of Boccaccio, though styled a "Commedia," and registered as such in the "Drammaturgia" of Allacci, has no pretensions to the denomination; it is, in fact, a long prose idyllum or eclogue, with poetic sprinklings, like the "Arcadia" of Sannazaro, of which it was probably the prototype⁷. But the FARSA of the latter poet, which was pre-

for him, which affects his moral character, has left a golden monument to his memory. Mazzuchelli, *Vita del Aretino*, Pad. 1741, p. 137, 238. Justice has been also lately done to the memory of this neglected writer, in *The Month. Mag.* vol. iv. p. 463.

⁴ *L'Ameto, over Commedia delle Ninfe*. The scene of this pastoral, so rich in luxuriant description, lies on "il piacevole piano, già vicino a quella parte ove il Mugorone muore con le sue onde."

⁵ *Ven.* 1755.

⁶ Neither Fontanini nor Ap. Zeno seem to have known that there was an earlier edition of the *Arcadia* than that of *Ven.* 1504. Yet it appears from a note in an edition in my possession, intitled *Libro pastorale nominato Arcadia*, Mil. 1504, (which also escaped the notice of these learned gentlemen) that it was first printed in *Ven.* 1502. It is said by M. Tenhove, that the *Arcadia* gave birth to the Arcadian academy of

Rome, vol. ii. p. 68. This assertion is confirmed by the author of *Mém. Istor. degli Arcadi*, Rom. 1761, p. 4.

⁷ The *Ameto* and *Arcadia* bear so strong a resemblance to the pastorals of the Troubadours, that we can be at no loss to discover whence the idea was borrowed. The author of *Lett. sur les Trouveres*, having mentioned some existing pastorals by these wandering bards, adds, "Comme un des principaux mérites des piéces de théâtre, est l'art du dialogue, et l'expression marquée et soutenue des caractéres; et comme ces qualités se font remarquer dans les pastourelles des Troubadours, je croirois en effet qu'ils exercerent dans le genre dramatique." *Voy. de Prov.* tom. ii. p. 251. Perhaps it is to these productions we should refer the origin of the pastoral drama, if the early bards of the Loire should not be able to establish their claim to this honour. *Vid. Fab. ou Cont. du XII. et XIII. Sié.* tom. ii. p. 141.

sented on the 4th of March 1492, in the hall of the Castel Capuano⁸, in Naples, before Alfonso duke of Calabria, on occasion of the surrender of Granada to the arms of Ferdinand and Isabella, is not only declared by the title to be dramatic, but appears on inspection to bear some resemblance to the MASK of the early English stage, as we shall now proceed to shew.

FARSA DEL SANNAZARO⁹.

ON withdrawing the *tela*, or curtain, a scene, representing a temple supported by twenty columns richly ornamented, appears in the middle of the hall. A tumultuous noise is heard within, and Mahomet rushes out. At the same instant a banner, displaying a cross and the arms of Castile, is raised on the top of the temple. Mahomet advances and speaks. He laments his fate, expatiates on his former greatness, and says, there was a time when his name inspired terror :

⁸ The present Vicaria. "C'est (says De la Lande) un grand bâtiment isolé dont les murs sont très-élevés et très-forts ; on l'appelloit autrefois Castello Capuano, à cause de voisinage de la porte de Capoue ; et Normannia, à cause de Guillaume le Normand qui l'avoit fait bâtir ; il fut ensuite augmenté par l'empereur Frederic, sur les dessins de Jean de

Pise, vers l'an 1200 : ce fut la résidence des rois de Naples jusqu'à Ferdinand I. Le vice-roi Pierre de Tolède en 1540 y plaça les tribunaux de justice et les prisons." *Tom. vii, p. 123.*

⁹ *Farsa di M. Jacopo Sannazaro.* This is the title which it bears in the *Rime* of the author subjoined to an edition of the *Arcadia*, *Nap. 1782.*

Un tempo fui

Pena, e terror d'altrui.

While he speaks, he feels the ground tremble beneath his feet, and perceives the approach of his enemy, Faith. The noise increases, and he flies. Then Faith issues from the temple, splendidly dressed, and crowned with laurel. She delivers a long monologue on the strength and extent of her power, in which she apostrophises Ferdinand, and compliments Alfonso on his victory over the Turks at Otranto. She predicts that the East as well as the West will be submitted to her power :

Mi vedrò sottoposto l'oriente,

Com' or veggio il Ponente.

Having concluded her soliloquy, she retires into the temple ; and the scene upon which this edifice is represented, is removed to the upper part of the stage. Again the portal opens, and Letizia (or Mirth), gayly clad, issues, attended by three musicians playing on the cornamusa¹, flauto, and ribeca. Accompanying her voice with the viola, Letizia advances, singing, to the place

¹ From the introduction of the cornamusa, or bagpipe, in the stage-directions of this little drama, it would seem to be an instrument of high antiquity in Calabria; probably of Greek origin. It is still a pastoral instrument in that country. *Swin-*

burne, Trav. in the Two Sicil. vol. ii. p. 283, 8vo. On the use of the cornamusa among the ancients, *vid. Diff. vii. of the Diff. Accad. dell' Accad. Etrus. di Cortona, tom. vii. Diff. prefixed to The Complaynt of Scot. Edin 1801, p. 139.*

where the scene representing the temple stood, and, with the frenzied eye of poetry, seems to behold Ferdinand and Isabella, with all their family. Then addressing the audience, she asks why they appear so splendidly dressed and so joyful :

O Duchi, o Donne,
Perchè sì ricche gonne indosso avete :
Perchè state sì liete ?

To this inquiry, she herself replies: because cruel Mahomet is now a fugitive, and Granada restored to its ancient faith, *al suo antico rito*. Then raising the veil which covered her face, she declares who she is :

Io son quella Letizia, che col rito
Adorno il Paradiso, &c. ²

After expatiating on the blessings of Peace, she concludes thus :

Ecco qui primavera : ecco qui fiori :
Ecco soavi odori : ecco diletto.
Ridete voi, e gianga sol Maumetto.

While she repeats these lines, she strews flowers over the stage, and returns, singing, into the tem-

² There is a similar conceit in *de Partu Virginis*, lib. iii. v. 93. Where Sannazaro learned to personify Mirth, as Jov, I cannot ascertain; but he must have known that the ancients made Pitys, or Faith, (who is one of his characters) a goddess. Vid. *Aulularia* of Plautus, *As.* iv. sc. 2, 3, and prologue to the *Cefias* of the same author.

ple, whence issue several masks of both sexes, dressed in the Spanish fashion, and attended by trumpeters. A dance concludes the piece ³.

PREVIOUS to the composition of this little piece, Sannazaro seems to have confined the exercise of his poetical talents, exclusively, to the Latin language. But an ardent passion which he conceived and cherished for Carmosina Bonifacia, a Neapolitan lady of noble birth, induced him to cultivate and write in a language which she understood, and could enjoy. Hence his productions in the lingua volgare. Of these, it may be presumed, the soft breathings of his passion were the first. The fame of his poetry reaching the court of Ferrante I, he was invited by Don Federico, the second son of the king, to enter into his service, and become a permanent guest in his palace. As dramatic spectacles were amongst the favourite amusements of Federico, Sannazaro did not fail to minister to the indulgence of that prevailing passion. It was probably with that view the *Farfa*, which we have reviewed, was written. But his patron appears to have delighted most in a kind of ludicrous spectacle (*giocosi spettacoli*),

³ While the *Farfa* of Sannazaro was exhibiting in Naples, the *Hysperia Batica* of Verarda was representing, on the same occasion, in Rome.

which bore a resemblance to the ancient Satyræ ⁴. For the gratification of this wayward fancy, Sannazaro wrote the "Gliomero," a *guazzabuglio*, or dramatic medley of irregular form ⁵. It does not, however, appear, that there were satyrs amongst the *dramatis personæ* of this piece. The characters were "intellectual gladiators," of the lower order of people, who employed the vulgar dialect, or rather the *slang*, of Naples, as the vehicle of their coarse wit, or buffoon railing. This little drama was, in fact, an imitation of the *Atellanæ fabulæ*, which were supposed to have originated near Averfa (a small town in the Neapolitan dominions), and which, according to Diomedes, "were replete with jocular witticisms, and very much resembled the Greek satyrs."—*Dictis jocularibus refertæ, similes fere sunt satyricis fabulis Græcorum*, and which, he might have added, were the prototype of these *fabulæ* ⁶. As no vestiges of the "Gliomero" remain, we can only form an idea of its construction, or rather of the elements of which it was composed, from the ludicrous scene

⁴ Crispo, *Vita di G. Sannazaro*, prefixed to *L'Arcadia*, Nap. 1782.

⁵ The learned Sig. de Ocheda, whom I consulted on the derivation of this word, observes, that "Gio. Ant. Volpi lo fa derivare da *Glomerus*; e potrebbe essere," he adds, "interpretato un *guazzabuglio*, siccome pare che realmente fosse, dalle parole del Crispo, autore della vita del Sannazaro." I shall transcribe the words of Crispo: "*Gliomero*, nome

conveniente all' opera, in cui si raccolgono tutte sentenze, e veci goffe del parlare antico Napoletano, con digressioni molto ridicole." *Ibid.* p. 7. Crispo's life of Sannazaro is full and satisfactory. Nor has the Neapolitan bard been less fortunate in an English biographer. Some of his Latin poems have received new graces from the pen of M. Grefwell.

⁶ Vid. Hurd's *Horace*, vol. i. p. 172. Lond. 1753.

which passed between Sarmentus and Cicerrus, in the presence of Horace and his fellow-travellers, near ⁷ Capua. We may, however, conclude, and safely assert, that Sannazaro may dispute with Giraldis the honour which he claims, of having first revived the ancient SATYRA, in his "Egle," a dramatic pastoral². But both these poets must be content to yield the palm to Politiano, who, in his "Orfeo," (written so early as 1472), by the introduction of a satyr and a dithyrambic ode, presented an evident, if not a perfect, imitation of the Greek Satyra.

Of the same nature of the "Gliomero," were, probably, the inedited *buffonesche Farse*³ of Antonio Caracziolo, presented in the presence of Ferdinando I, as well as some of the pieces exhibited by the Fiortini in Naples on the triumphal entry of Alfonso I, of Arragon, into that city¹. It would seem, too, that the "Tragedia dil maximo

⁷ Sat. lib. i, sat. 5, l. 51—70.

² The *Egle* of Giraldis was written at least fourteen years after the death of Sannazaro. It was represented for the first time in Ferrara, in the presence of Hercole II, in 1545, the year in which it was probably composed. Sannazaro died in 1530. Yet Giraldis boasts, that "dopo mille e più anni, di aver posto in questo campo il piede." And Ap. Zeno, forgetting the *Orfeo* of Politiano, and the *Jubel aureus* of Tlesio, says, that "egli abbia voluto dire, dopo due mille e più anni." I, p. 413.

³ It seems that the lighter kinds of dramatic compositions of this period were generally distinguished by

the name of *Farfa*. Several instances occur in this section. And in the account of the reception of Bianca da Este in Milan, by Bandello, it is related that, "si recitò una *Farfa* non già molto lunga." Part. 1^o, nov. 44. Quadrio bestows a profusion of learning on the derivation of the word *farfa*, with very little success. V, p. 54. The reader will derive much more satisfaction on this subject, from Litt. xlix. of Litt. of Literature.

¹ I found this conjecture on the assertion of Minturno, who says, that the *Farfe Cavajuolo* of Naples, in his time, were "simili alle Atellane."

e dannoso errore in che è avviluppato il fragil e volubil sexo femineo," of *Il Notturmo*, who flourished about the same period ², does not rise much above those farcical pieces. It is written in verses of various measures, passing from the ottava to terza rima, and frequently offering scenes of comic humour in both: it contains also some airs, in anacreontic measure, with an *intercalare*, or burthen, which were sung in four parts ³. The "*Gaudio d'Amore*," of the same author, in terza rima, is a piece of low comic humour, which seems to have been calculated to amuse the class of society which supplied the interlocutors. We meet with the same variety of metre which we noticed in the tragedy of *Il Notturmo*, in the "*Amicizia*" of Giacomo Nardi, the celebrated translator of Livy, which is referred by Fontanini to the year 1494. This comedy, says the author, in the prologue (which is delivered by Mercury), cannot properly be said to belong either to the *Togata*, or the *Palliata* ⁴; it may be rather called the *Lacerata*, a new species that prevails in these times:

² Crescimbeni observes, that *Il Notturmo* is a *nom de guerre*. "Chi si nasconde sotto questo nome," says he, "non abbiám mai saputo rimvergare. Ma chiunque egli si fosse, certa cosa è, che fu uno de' rimatori della scuola del Tibaldeo, e fiorì circa il 1480." *Tom. v. p. 58*. His dramas were not printed for many years after they were written. They were probably edited by some friend

after his death. The first edition is that of *Ven. 1526, 8vo*.

³ This early instance of enlivening dramatic dialogue, with airs, in the manner of the modern comic opera, is a curious circumstance in the history of the musical drama.

⁴ All these denominations are fully and learnedly explained by Eiskop Hurd. *Her. vol. i. p. 180*.

Nell' Idioma Tosco

Tal fabula è composta.

A qual gener si accosta?

*Palliat*a si chiama

Chi altra specie brami,

Togata quella dica,

Benchè meglio si esplica,

Chiamarla *LACERATA*,

Nuova specie, usitata

In questi tempi nostri.

The argument of this piece is in versi sciolti; and the prologue, as the foregoing extract shews, in verse of seven syllables. At the conclusion is a kind of epilogue, or *Licenza*, in ottava rima, which was sung to the accompaniment of the lyre⁵. The duration of the action is extended to a year⁶.

Apostolo Zeno, who omits no opportunity of oppugning the opinions of Fontanini, asserts, on the authority of some passages in the epilogue, that the comedy in question was written in 1513⁷, when Nardi was employed by the duke

⁵ I shall transcribe the first stanza of this epilogue.

Salute, o santo seggio, eccelfo, e deg-
no,

Da quel, da cui ogni salute pende;
Letizia e pace a cui sotto il tuo seg-
no

Si posa, e lieto ogni tuo bene attende:
E cessi il marzial furore e sdegno,
Che fa tremare il mondo, Italia in-
cende;

Che'l clangor delle tube, e il suon
dell' armi

Non lasciar modulare i dolci carmi.

Fontanini supposes this address to be directed to the Signoria of Florence, on the descent of Charles VIII. into Italy, and the banishment of the Medici.

⁶ If the author's reason, or rather apology, for this violation of the unity of time, should not be thought satisfactory, it merits at least transcription: "i costumi de' nostri tempi essendo diversi da que' de' tempi superiori, ha pensato, che avessero gli uomini diritto di cangiare anche il metodo."

⁷ *Biblioth. della Elog. Ital.* t. i, p. 390.

of Urbino, to assist in preparing the pageants, and other public spectacles, which were exhibited in Florence on occasion of the elevation of Leo X. to the papal chair ⁸. But as the solution of this historic doubt is not necessary for our present purpose, we shall proceed to the

“ Farfa, Satira Morale ⁹,” of Venturino of Pefaro, a gallant foldier (*valoroso capitano*, fays Quadrio) of this age. This piece is particularly deferving our notice, as it is fupposed that Spampana, the hero, or principal perfonage of the drama, was the original CAPITANO GLORIOSO ¹, a character well known, and long diftinguifhed, upon the early Italian ftage. Spampana is evidently an imitation of the Pyrgopolinices of Plautus. However, Quadrio feems to think, that although the original idea was probably borrowed from the “ Miles Gloriosus ²,” the archetype after which

⁸ Nardi, like fome of the early Englifh poets, condefcended to affift in defigning masks. That on the fubject of Camillus, which was exhibited under the direktion of Francesco Granacci, on occafion of a vifit which Leo X. made (1513) to Florence, was defigned by Nardi. *Vafari*, tom. iv. p. 232. And the canzoni, which were fung in the courfe of the representation, were compofed by him. Thefe lyric effufions are inferted in tom. i. of *Canti Carnafcialefchi*, where a portrait of the poet is given.

⁹ *Imprefsa in Milano, 4to, fenza nota di anno*. This edition may be referred to the fifteenth century, as the author is faid by Crefcimbene to have flourifhed about 1490.

¹ Francesco Andreini, of Piftoja, who lived about 1600, was celebrated for his performance of this character. He was, in confequence, called “ Il Capitano Spavento da Valle Inferna.” *Quadrio*, V. p. 230. Riccoboni gives an account, and an engraving, of the drefs, of this character, tom. ii. p. 315. And feveral curious particulars relating to it are mentioned by *Quadrio*, V. p. 216, 217.

² Quadrio found, in the Mufeo Chircheriano, a mutilated baffo relievo of a mask, which he fupposes was intended to represent this character. “ La caricatura della mafchera,” fays he, “ è di vifo gonfio, e di bocca difforme: e ha una tunica aperta in tanti fori rotondi, che rappresenta per avventura un gran Giacco tra

Venturino immediately copied, was either a brother officer, or some braggard captain who had met his observation during his military campaigns. He justly supposes that the Spanish armies which, at that time, frequently passed through Italy to Naples, abounded in such braggadocios. Spampana is thus made to unfold his own character.

SPAM.

El Spampana mi chiamo ; e un uomo sono,
 Che faccio altrui paura sol col sguardo :
 Ma a chi ben voglio, non mai l'abbandono.
 Uomo al mondo più bravo, e più gagliardo
 Di me non si ritrova ; a te vo dire
 Tutte le pruove mie senza riguardo.
 Mille in un giorno ne ho facto morire.

ASS.

Sì di le mosche, &c.

SPAM.

Spampana is my name, my looks alone
 Give terror to the man that meets my eye.
 Yet in affection strong I yield to none,
 Though not a bolder breathes beneath the sky.
 Truly I tell you (for I scorn to boast)
 My sword has sped a thousand in a day.—

ASS.

Ay, of flies, &c. &c.

que' tanto diversi di spezie, che si leggono usati dagli antichi." *Tom. v.* | p. 217. This description is illustrated by a plate.



IV. **B**UT let us now pass to a species of drama of Italian growth³, which originated with the church, and flourished under its auspices during the gloom of the middle ages; we mean the **RAPPRESENTAZIONE, FESTA, STORIA, MISTERIO, or ESEMPIO**; for by all these denominations the species to which we allude was distinguished⁴.

³ It is the opinion of Mr. Ellis, that the religious pantomimes and farces, since known by the names of *Fête des Fous, Fête de l'Ante*, &c. invented or adopted, about the year 990, by Theophylact, patriarch of Constantinople, passing first into Italy, suggested the composition of

Mysteries, which, from thence, found their way into France and the rest of Europe. *Spec. of early Eng. Poet.* vol. i. p. 342. See also *Quadrio, Stor. d'Ogn. Poet.* iv. p. 52.

⁴ L'argomento dicevasi l'annunziazione, e serviva loro in vece del prologo, perchè in essa s'annunziava

This rude drama was uniformly founded upon subjects drawn either from holy writ, or from the lives of the saints, or the martyrs. In its construction, neither unity of time nor place were observed; nor was the action usually broken by the divisions of acts or scenes, or, in fact, any attempt made at imitating the simple form of the ancient model. The argument was delivered in a short *annunzia*, or prologue, by an angel, who strictly enjoined silence (*silenzio! State cbete*); and a moral, flowing from the subject, concluded the piece. It does not appear that the dialogue in general was recited to the accompaniment of music; however, instances of musical recitation sometimes occur. In the *rappresentazione* of S. Barbara, we read,

all 'audienza la sustanza o 'l fatto della rappresentazione, e facevasi recitare da un Gjoanetto vestito da Angiolo. *Off. sopra le rime sacre*, &c. p. 6. Dacier observes, that it appears from the prologue to the *Hecyra* of Terence, that the prologue was usually delivered by a young actor. Hence, probably, the practice to which Cionacci alludes. A similar practice prevailed at the performance of Oratorios in Bologna, when Mr. Wright visited that city in 1720. "They have in their churches," says this enlightened traveller, "a diverting piece of devotion, which they call an oratorio: it is a musical drama of two acts, after the manner of the stage operas, with recitativo between the songs. The subject is either some scripture story, or a story of some

of their own saints; generally the last. Between the acts there is a sermon; so timed (I suppose) to secure such of the audience as might be apt to leave the preacher in the lurch, if they were not to have some music to sweeten their mouths with at last. The whole is introduced with a performance somewhat unusual, a *discorso*, (as they term it) spoken by a little boy: we heard two of them; the first was about six years old, who mounted the rostrum with a manly gravity, and after having saluted the audience, cocked his hat, (for they are covered upon such occasions in the churches) and, with a solemn wave of his hand, pronounced *Silenzio!* before he began his discourse." *Travels*, p. 449, Lond. 1764.

Reciterem con dolce voci e canti, &c.

With dulcet modulation we'll recite.

In S. Orfola ⁵,

Di Orfola clemente, onesta e pia,
Noi possiam recitar con dolce canto.

In numbers sweet, Orfola's praise we'll sing.

In Istella ⁶,

Carità, Fede, Speranza, ed Amore,
Canterà tutto l'odierno canto.

Faith, Hope, and Love, our lofty song shall raise,
And heavenly Charity's unbounded praise.

And in S. Lorenzo, the bearers of the body of the saint to the sepulchre, sing, as they proceed, *Benedictus dominus deus Israel*⁷. But instrumental music was often introduced in the course of the representation. In S. Panuntio we find the following stage-directions: " Et decto questo San Panuntio va a trovare el sonatore, e trova el sonatore che fuona e canta chosì dicendo." This sonatore, or musician, afterwards takes a part in the dialogue, acknowledging that he had been a thief, but that

⁵ In the collection of the late M. Crofts, there were two editions of this rappresentazione, *Siena*, 1592 and 1608.

⁶ The edition of this rappresentazione, in Mr. Roscoe's collection, is in black letter, without date, or name of place. In the catalogue of *Bibli-*

oth. Croft. two editions are enumerated, *Fir.* 1592, *Sien.* 1609. The latter is said to have been composed by Mutio Fiordiani.

⁷ Et decto questo portano le veste di Sancto Lorenzo et acconciàlo nel catalecto, e portàlo a lo sepultura, cantando divotamente *Agnedius*, &c.

he now earns an honest livelihood by his zampogna, or pipe, which he declares he never uses on any improper occasion :

Io fui ladrone e hor vivo di canto,
E di sonar con questo mie stromento, &c.

In the graphic embellishments of " Riena Hester," several figures appear at the marriage of the queen, and the feast which follows, playing on certain instruments, in use, it may be presumed, at the time this rappresentazione was written. Amongst these we discover the cetra, or cittern. To this instrument the prologue to the rappresentazione of " Constantino Imperadore" was recited ⁸.

The music employed in these dramas was generally Canto fermo; but it may be supposed that when Madrigals, or the lighter kinds of lyric poetry, were introduced, (as was often the case) they were sung to popular airs, or suitable music. It may be safely conjectured, if it cannot be affirmed, that the vocal musicians who assisted on these occasions, were sometimes supplied by the

⁸ The names of the several musical instruments in use at this period, may be learned from the following passage in the *Margento Maggiore* of Luigi Pulci, whose family contributed liberally to the public stock of rappresentazioni of the fifteenth century.

Fatto il convito, vennon molti fuoni,

Acciò che meno il giorno lor rincresca,
Trombe, e trombette, e nacchere, e busoni,
Cembali, e flauti, e cembanello in tresca,
Corni, tambur, cornamuse, e fiegliani
E molt' altri stromenti alla morelca,
Liuti, e arpe, e chitarre, e saltori,
Buffoni, e giuochi, e infiniti piaceri.
Cant. xvi. st. 25, Fior. 1732.

Laudisti, a society that was instituted at Florence so early as the year 1310, for the performance of religious poems⁹.

The rappresentazioni, according to Cionacci, were exhibited not only in sacred places, and public squares, but in private houses, and at the meetings of fraternities, or religious societies¹. Vafari, in his Life of Il Cecca, enumerates the following churches in Florence, in the piazze of which were annually exhibited certain *Feste*, with appropriate decorations, designed and executed by this ingenious artist; S. Maria Novelle, S. Croce, San Spirito, il Carmine, and S. Felice. In the festa of the "Ascension," which was represented in the piazza of Il Carmine, and on which he seems to dwell with most delight, he says, Christ was drawn up from the summit of a mountain, exquisitely formed of wood, on a cloud filled with angels, who attended him to heaven, leaving the apostles below wondering at the miracle². In his account of Filippo di Ser Brunellesco, the restorer of real architecture, he says, that the apparatus for the representation of the "Festa della Nunziata," was invented and supplied by Filippo, who displayed on the occasion

⁹ Cionacci, *Offero*. p. 23. Boccaccio, *Decam. Giorn.* vii. nov. 1. Burney, *Hist. of Music*, ii. p. 325. *Appendix*, No. iv.

¹ *Offero*. p. 23.

² *Tom.* iii. p. 382. Vafari, from

the practice of this artist, gives a receipt for cloud-making, (*come si fabricassero le nuvole*) which the reader may find in p. 385 of the volume to which we have just referred.

great industry and ingenuity. On high, says he, you beheld the sky animated with figures in motion, and an infinity of lights flashing like the coruscations which appear in a thunder storm³. Cionacci possessed a MS. rappresentazione, intitled, "Abramo ed Isac," by Feo Belcari, at the end of which was written, "The foregoing rappresentazione was exhibited, for the first time, at Florence, in the church of S. Maria Maddalena, in the place called Cestelli, in the year 1448⁴."

From the state of the arts at this time, we may conclude that the scenic decorations of the rappresentazioni were as rude as the dramas they were intended to illustrate⁵; however, we cannot deny the praise of ingenuity to the invention of the machinery. Besides the instances we have already adduced, we shall observe, that when S.

³ *Ibid.* p. 146. A piece of machinery, equally ingenious, by Cecca, in the church of the Carmine, is described in p. 383 of the same volume. The reigning church, at this period, found itself under the necessity of encouraging every art of elegance and ingenuity that might assist in stimulating the zeal, and inflaming the hearts, of its votaries. For a full and clear account of the effect of this policy on the art of painting, see M. Fuseli's second Lecture. *Lect. on Paint.* Lond. 1801.

⁴ "La soprad detta rappresentazione si fece la prima volta in Firenze nella chiesa di S. Maria Maddalena luogo detto Cestelli, l'anno 1444. et 1445. le quali stanze fece

Feo Belcari." *Offerv.* p. 24. This piece has been often reprinted. Vid. *Dramm.* of Alacci.

⁵ It appears, however, from the graphic embellishments of the first editions of the rappresentazioni of the fifteenth century, that the art of drawing, even at that early period, had made rapid advances towards the perfection at which it has since arrived. There is a chasteness of design, and correctness of drawing, in many of those embellishments, that would not disgrace the most masterly pencil of the present day. Of this there are abundant proofs in a collection of thirty-two rappresentazioni, in black letter, now lying on my table.

Catherine, in the rappresentazione which bears her name, is placed between two wheels, thunder is heard, and an earthquake counterfeited, while angels descend to console the expiring martyr⁶. And in "S. Eustachio," a cloud drops on the tower wherein the martyr and his family are confined, and receives the parting souls, which, resting upon its bosom, ascend singing⁷. Sometimes stars fall in showers⁸; and sometimes the guilty head is smitten with a thunder-bolt⁹.

Among the most distinguished writers of the rappresentazioni of the age under review, were Jacopo Alamanni, Bernardo and Antonio Pulci¹, and Lorenzo de' Medici, detto il magnifico. The

⁶ Essendo messa tra due ruote venghono due angeli sopra lei, et uno dice, &c. In this part of the drama, the graver is employed to illustrate the description.

⁷ Sono messi nel toro, et una nuvola viene da cielo e l'anime ne portò cantando.

⁸ Vid. *proleg. al Trionf. del martirio di S. Timpa.*

⁹ This prodigal use of fire, on some occasions, proved fatal. "For the amusement of the duke (of Milan) and his attendants," says Mr. Roscoe, "three public spectacles were exhibited; one of which was the Annunciation of the Virgin, another the Ascension of Christ, and the third the Descent of the Holy Spirit. The last was exhibited in the church of the S. Spirito; and as it required the frequent use of fire, the building caught the flames, and was entirely consumed." *Vol. ii. p. 139.* A black letter copy of this rappresentazione, intitled, *La Festa*

de miracolo dello Spirito Santo, now lies before me. It has neither date, nor name of place where printed. I shall gratify the curious reader with a transcript of the *Annunzia*.

Desideroso popol di vedere
cosa che di tuo fede e firmamento,
sic presente adempiuto al tuo volere;
ma pògi orecchio et sta coll' ochio
attento,
el bel miracol ti faren sapere,
dello Spirito Sancto e sic contento
quieto con riposo staran pace,
et no comincieren coma Dio piace.

¹ M. Tenhove, speaking of the Pulci family, says, "The two brothers had a sister (in-law) likewise, who distinguished herself in the same career; and one of their contemporaries applied to them the

Carminibus patriis nobilissima Pulcia proles."

"Conversion of S. Maria Maddelena" of Alaman-
ni, (the only production of this species that fell
from his pen) is divided into five acts; but the
"Barlaam e Josefât" of Bernardo Pulci², and
"La Festa di Sancto Francesco"³ of his wife,
Antonia, as well as their other sacred dramas, are
uninterrupted dialogues. The "Barlaam e Jo-
sefat" contains some passages that would not dis-
grace a more regular production; but the rappre-
sentazione of Antonia seems to be the legend of
S. Francis reduced to metre. In both, the pre-
vailing wild, or irregular, plan, is religiously ad-
hered to, except at the commencement of the
latter, in which the *annunziatione* is omitted, and
its place supplied by an invocation to the virgin,
and her son. Antonia's hopes, however, seem to
rest chiefly on the former, whom she entreats
may, with her divine aid, and wife counsels, en-
able her to conduct her little bark with safety to
the destined port.

² Cionacci, who ascribes this piece
to Socci Perrettano, (p. 15) is cor-
rected by Crescimbeni. *Tom. i. p.*
302. Alacci falls into the same er-
ror. *Dram. Ven. 1755, p. 137*. But
all doubts in regard to the author
are removed by a copy in my pos-
session, which opens thus: "In co-
mincia la rappresentatione di Bar-
laam e Josefât composta per Bernar-
do Pulci."

³ At the end of the only copy of
this rappresentazione I have seen,

we read, "Finita la festa di sancto
Francesco, composta per Mona An-
tonia, dona di Bernardo Pulci."
This, which had formerly been in
the Pinelli collection, and which has
neither date, nor name of place
where printed, was probably the
first edition. Two other rappresen-
tazioni by this seraphic dame, are
enumerated in the *Dramm. p. 346—*
430. This lady was of the family
of Tanini.

Et tu Vergine eletta in ciel Maria,
che siedi dalla destra del tuo figlio,
accendi, infiamma la mia fantasia
col tuo divino aiuto e buon consiglio,
accendi in porto la battezzata mia
arribar possa, senza alcun periglio ;
che se de peccator ferma colonna
della terra, e del ciel regina e donna.

Thou favourite of the sky, distinguish'd maid !
On thy great son's right hand exalted nigh,
With thine empyreal flame my breast inspire,
And give the inspiration of the sky,
That my tost bark, by thy celestial aid,
The port may find, and every danger fly,
Column of guilty man, thy name is known
Through all. In earth and heaven thou fill'st a double throne.

*

As Lorenzo de' Medici holds an exalted rank in the republic of letters, we shall hope for the indulgence of the reader while we descend into a minute analysis of his " San Giovanni e San Paolo." This piece is denominated, in the prologue, " una Storia nuova e fanta." The subject, which is drawn partly from history, and partly from the legends of the saints and martyrs introduced, is treated with the prevailing disregard of the Aristotelian precepts ; but as it was written for exhibition in the author's own family, on occasion of the marriage (1488) of his daughter Maddelena with Francesco Cibo, and intended

to be represented by his own children⁴, it was calculated as well to edify as to amuse, and is, therefore, sprinkled with moral and religious precepts. This will appear from the promised analysis.

LA RAPPRESENTAZIONE DI SAN GIOVANNI E PAULO.

The *annunziiazione*, or prologue, is, as usual, delivered by an angel⁵, who desires the audience to be particularly attentive to the vocal music,—

Senza tumulto stien le voci chete,
Massimamente poi quando si canta⁶.

and concludes with soliciting their indulgence for the performers, who are, he says, youthful members of the Compagnia di S. Giovanni⁷; a

⁴ Giovanni de' Medici, afterwards Leo X, was one of the performers on this occasion.

⁵ The angel who opens this piece, like L. Ambivius Turpio, who delivered the prologue to the *Hecyra* of Terence, on its first representation, unites the protatic personage, and the orator, or pleader. Perhaps the angel who delivers the prologue to the early Italian mysteries, was the real archetype of the Spirit that opens the *Comus* of Milton.

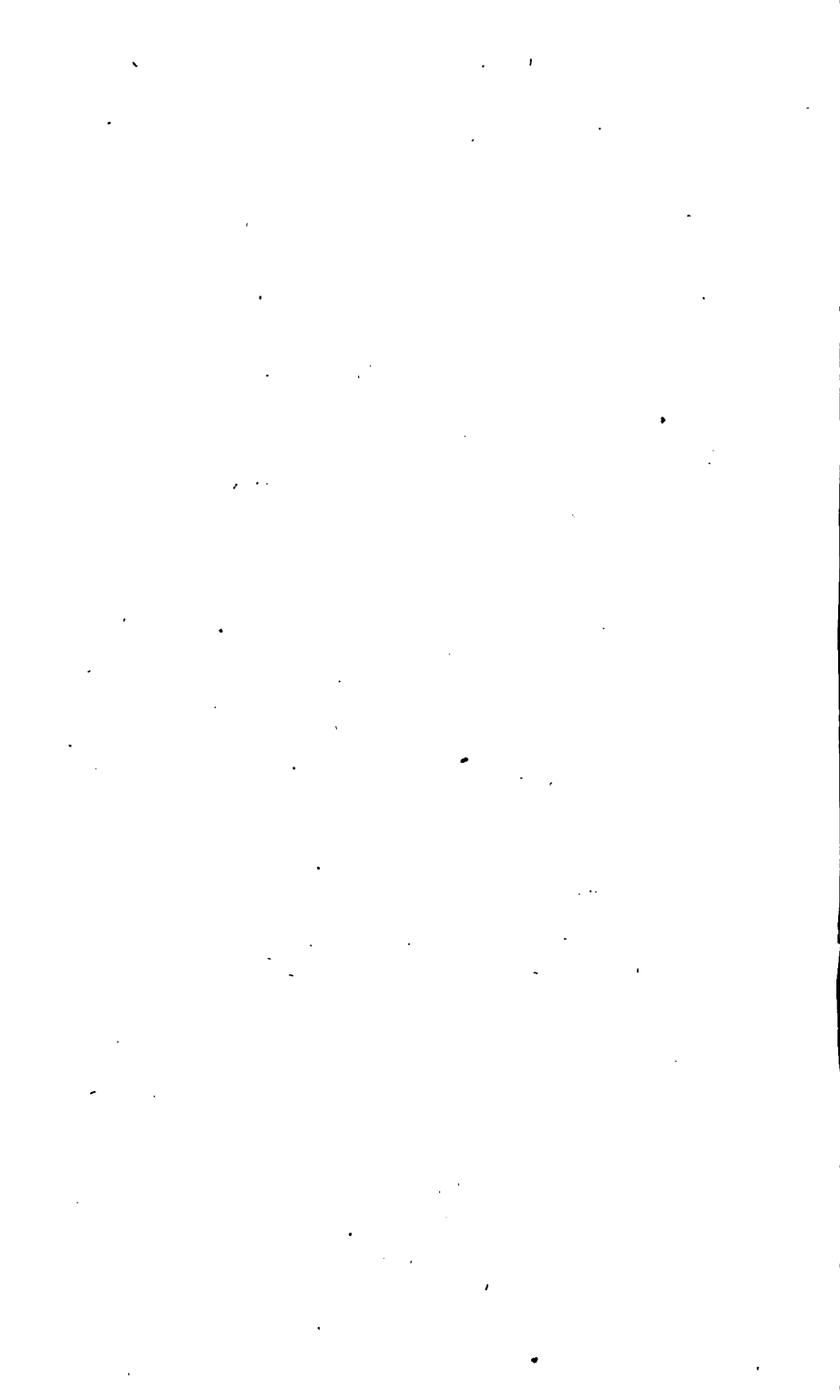
⁶ All my extracts are made from Cionacci's edition of this drama, in *Rime sacre del magnifico Lorenzo de'*

Medici, Fir. 1680. To this edition is prefixed the editor's advertisement to the first edition, in black letter. A faithful transcript of this advertisement, with all its contractions, is given in *Appendix*, No. V.

In the *Bib. Crofti*. I find an edition of this drama printed at Siena, 1602, with the following title, *Rappresentazione di Santa Giovanni e Paulo, e di Santa Costanza, del mag. Lorenzo de' Medici*. Several editions appeared at Florence. *Dramm. di L. Alacci*, Ven. 1750.

⁷ The confraternity of St. John (*La Compagnia del Vangelista*) con-





religious society that occasionally varied its scholastic exercises with the exhibition of sacred dramas.

La Compagnia del nostro San Giovanni,
Fa questa Festa ; e s'iam pur giovanetti,
Però scusate e nostri teneri anni,
Se' versi non son buoni, ovver ben detti ;
Nè fanno de' signor vestire e panni,
O vecchi, o donne, esprimer fanciulletti, &c.

The action commences six days after the martyrdom of S. Agnese. Three of her relations enter,

sisted of youths from the age of twelve to eighteen or twenty. During their tyrocinium, or novitiate, they were at liberty to attend the meetings of the theological society, (*confraternità di dottrina*) but were not permitted to take any part in its discussions. Such of the fraternity as conducted themselves to the satisfaction of the guardian, were secretly introduced by him at the meetings of the society or confraternity of disciplinarians, who assembled at night, where the theological society met in the open day. Here they were instructed in spiritual exercises, according to their age and capacity. But it would seem that the primary object of their education was, the acquisition of practical and theoretical skill in music. In the sacred drama of Lorenzo de' Medici, which was exhibited by some members of this confraternity, the audience, as we have before observed, are desired to be particularly attentive to the vocal music.

How long this society continued their dramatic exercises, I cannot determine ; but it appears from the following article in the *Dramatur-*

gia of Alacci, that they had not ceased in the succeeding century. *Esaltazione della Santa Croce ridotta in atto recitabile rappresentativo, recitata in Firenze da' Giovanni della Compagnia di S. Giov. Evangelista, coll' occasione delle Nozze del Gran duca di Toscana. Fir. 1592.* It would seem, that the Compagnia del Vangelista bore some resemblance, in the nature of its institution, to the companies of singing-boys in the choirs, and the law societies in England, prior to the usurpation of Cromwell ; but I am inclined to think, that its members were not, like those of the English companies, occasionally employed or indulged in acting profane plays. Vid. *Warton, Hist. of Eng. Poet. vol. i. sect. 6. Ellis, Sp. of the Early Eng. Poets, vol. i. p. 343, 344.*

We learn from Cionacci, that the children of Lorenzo de' Medici were members of the fraternity of St. John ; and he adds, that when Leo X. visited his native Florence, during his pontificate, he demonstrated, by some acts of munificence, the affectionate regard which he had entertained, from his youth, for this society.

lamenting her death. The first, with trembling apprehensions for his veracity, relates a dream, in which the faint, accompanied by her lamb, and attended by a train of virgins, appeared to him, clothed in white, offering consolation with "*dolce parole*," and rejoicing in her glorious exaltation.

Fuor dell' ombra del mondo or veggo el sole,
E sento el coro angelico che canta.

Beyond this world's projected shade, I see
The sun, and hear celestial minstrelsy.

The second and third relatives relate a similar dream. This removing the doubts entertained by the first kinsman, in regard to the certainty of the vision, he desires the others to rejoice with him, on their being now able to reckon on having an advocate in heaven.

Che abbiamo in Paradiso una avvocatà.

In heaven an advocate we now can boast.

Constantia (daughter of Constantine the Great) then appears, lamenting that she is rendered incapable of enjoying her rank and her wealth, by an incurable leprosy.

Sendo tutto ulcerato il corpo tenero.

She calls her life a living death, and wishes to

die, that she might give her father only one pang instead of an hundred.

Vivendo così dargljene cento.

One of her attendants humbly recommends it to her to have recourse to heaven, since medicine has failed, observing,

Che dove l'arte manca, abbonda Dio.

Where'er art fails, God's providence abounds.

He then suggests her visiting the tomb of S. Agnese, and imploring her aid. With this advice she complies; and, almost immediately after, we behold her bending before the shrine of the martyr, praying to be restored to health, in pity to her father. She then falls into a deep sleep. The saint appears, performs the cure, and exhorts the fair suppliant to love God, and eschew evil. The princess awakes, perceives the effects of the miracle, and solemnly devotes herself to S. Agnese, and to Christ. Then hastening to her father, she relates what has happened. The emperor, on being convinced of the cure, orders rejoicings. Let the mimi and the minstrels be called, says he, and let there be singing and dancing.

Sù ralleghianci tutti, e facciam festa :
O scalcò sù da far colezzion truova ;

The scene is then shifted to Dacia ; and we hear Gallicanus animating his drooping troops after a discomfiture. Paulo and Giovanni take advantage of this circumstance to convert Gallicanus to the christian faith, promising him victory as a reward. Their arguments prevail, and the general abjures his gods. An angel, with a cross, appears to Gallicanus, acquaints him with the acceptance of his conversion, and desires him to bear, in future, a cross in his standard⁹. Preparations are made for renewing the battle, and success attends the arms of Gallicanus. The king of Dacia and his sons are made prisoners. The royal captive intercedes for the lives of his children.

E tu, nelle cui man Fortuna è dato
 La vita nostra, et ogni nostra sorte,
 Bastiti avermi vinto e subjugato,
 Arsa la terra, ucciso el popol forte ;
 E non voler che veechjo io sia campato
 Per veder poi de' miei figliuol la morte ;
 Per vincer si vuol fare ogni potenza ;
 Ma dopo la vittoria usar clemenza.

⁹ The interposition of the angel, the conversion of Gallicanus, and his vow of chastity, are circumstances unfounded in history, and probably borrowed from the *Gallicanus* of Hroswitha, (a drama on the same subject) in which they may be found. Hroswitha was a German nun of the Benedictine order, who flourished about 980, and wrote six comedies, "ad æmulationem Terentii," of which an edition was printed at Nuremberg, 1501. Of this

learned lady a brief account is given by Quadrio, tom. iv. p. 51. She is more particularly mentioned by P. Mabillon, in *Ann. Bened.* tom. iii. lib. 47. It is but justice to the Benedictines to observe, that instead of wasting their time in turning over the musty tomes of the Fathers, and mumbling bad Latin, they are one of the few religious orders who devote their leisure to the cultivation of elegant literature.

You to whose hand the lots of life and death
 Are given, and all the fortunes of our line,
 Let it suffice that heaven has seal'd your wrath,
 And given to sword and fire, what once was miac.
 Let not an aged mortal sink beneath
 His children's fate, but to their fire resign
 Their guiltless lives. The power is all your own,
 But Mercy best supports the victor's throne.

*

The scene is again shifted, and a messenger enters to Constantine, with an account of the victory in Dacia. He questions the truth of the intelligence ; but the appearance, soon after, of Gallicanus, with the royal captive, removes his doubts. Gallicanus attributes his success to a miracle wrought by heaven on his conversion ; rejoices at the conversion of his daughters ; declines the hand of Constantia, and resolves to retire from the world.

Miglior novelle, alto Signore e degno,
 Ch' io non ti porto, or tu mi rende in dritto ;
 Che s' io ò preso e vinto un rè e 'l regno,
 Son delle mie figliuole assai più lieto,
 Che convertite a Dio han certo pegno
 Di vita eterna, che fa il cuor quieto :
 Che sottomette e' Rè e le province
 Non à vittoria ; ma chj 'l mondo vince.

Chj vince il mondo, il diavol sottomette,
 E 'di vera vittoria certa crede ;
 E 'l mondo è più, che le provincie dette,
 E 'l Diavol rè, che tutto lo possiede ;

Sol contra lui vittoria ci promette,
E vince il mondo sol la nostra fede ;
Adunque questa par vera vittoria,
Che à per premio poi eterna gloria.

Però, alto signor, se m' è permesso
Da tè, io vorrei starmi in solitudine,
Lasciare il mondo (e viver da me stesso)
La corte, et ogni ria consuetudine :
Per tè più volte ò già la vita messo,
Pericoli e fatiche in moltitudine ;
Per tè sparto ò più volte el sangue mio,
Lascia me in pace servire ora a Dio.

More glorious news I meet than these I bring,
Imperial Lord ! tho' with triumphant wreath
I hither brought in bonds the Dacian king,
More glad I hail the triumph of the faith
Over my filial train ; eternal spring
Of heavenly joy, that scorns the stroke of death.
Proud conquest spreads her purple wing no more ;
His is the conquest now whom kings adore.

To him that quells the world, the deadly foe
Of man submits ; and what are realms subdued
To conquer'd worlds ? tho' he to whom they owe
Their bondage spreads his sway o'er field and flood
In vain ; when to the ransom'd tribes below
Faith promises a ransom without blood.
Alone the genuine conquest truth allows,
Where fadeless palms adorn the victor's brows.

If leave be given me, then, imperial fire !
In solitude the remnant of my days
I mean to spend, and wean my fond desire
From courts and camps, and all their sinful ways.

Dangers and toil were oft my valour's hire,
 For thee incurr'd, thy deathless name to raise ;
 For thee I oft in battle pour'd my blood,
 Let me resign my future days to God.

*

The emperor reluctantly consents, and Gallicanus retires¹. Constantine then calls his sons, and declares his intention of relinquishing the throne. His address to them contains some excellent moral and political precepts, and assigns an affecting reason for his abdication.

Voi vedete le membre mie tremante,
 E 'l capo bianco, e non ben fermi i piedi :
 Questa età, dopo mie fatiche tante,
 Vuol che qualche riposo io li concedi.

You see my trembling limbs relax'd with age,
 My hoary temples, and unsteady feet ;
 After my labours on this earthly stage,
 My years may claim a short repose to meet.

On concluding this speech, the emperor retires, and Constantius and Constans yield their right to Constantinus, who is, accordingly, hailed emperor. While he is assuring his brothers, that his unexpected exaltation shall never lessen his fraternal affection, a messenger comes to announce an insurrection, which draws from the new emperor

¹ We are told in the margin, that " Gallicano si parte, e di lui non si fa più menzione."

some reflections on the cares of royalty. His brothers offer their service to march against the insurgents. They lead on the troops, and fall. Their death is declared to Constantinus. While he laments their untimely fate, one of his attendants, willing to offer comfort, observes, that it is, perhaps, better they were removed, as discord often arises between brothers.

Nascer suole
Dìcordia trà fratei molte fiato.
Fraternal bosoms oft diffensions breed.

The emperor then ascribes his misfortunes to his adherence to the christian faith, and threatens to persecute

Questa vil gente, quale a Cristo crede.
That odious sect who place in Christ their faith.

While he is uttering this impious threat, he is seized with the pangs of death, and expires. It is immediately agreed among the surrounding attendants, to invite Julian to accept the crown, though "*mago e monaco fia stato.*" A messenger is incontinently dispatched for him, and he almost instantly appears. In his address to his new subjects, he declares his apostacy, and his determination to persecute the christians, evincing, in the course of his speech, the truth of

the observation, that the devil may quote scripture for his purpose. A fawning courtier prefers a charge against Giovanni and Paulo; and they, by an imperial mandate, are brought before Julian, who accuses them of being christians, and, on that ground, asserts a claim to their property, unless they will consent to embrace paganism. They persist in their faith. The emperor, exasperated, declares they shall suffer a cruel death, if they do not, within ten days, abjure their God. He then orders Terentius, an officer of his guards, to take them in charge; and, if they persist in refusing to worship the statue of Jupiter, to behead them. They expostulate. The emperor is inflexible; and Terentius is desired to do his office. He shews them a golden image, and exhorts them to save their lives by worshipping it. This they refuse to do. He then calls Mastro Pietro², the executioner. They kneel, and are beheaded. The scene then changes, and the emperor appears, animating his subjects against the christians. He concludes with desiring the imperial astrologers to declare whether Mars be favourable to his designs, or not. He retires;

² Cionacci supposes, that Pietro was a kind of hereditary or generic name, by which the public executioner was distinguished in the time of Lorenzo: "Che il manigoldo qui venga chiamato mastro Pietro," says he, "credo perchè forse così

aveva nome il boia che in quei tempi era à Firenze, ne' quali questa rappresentazione fu composta; come adesso in vece di dire il Boia, si dice mastro Bastiano, perchè tale è il nome del Boia vecchjo vivente." *Offero. p. 21.*

and Saint Basil appears, recommending the church to the protection of heaven. The Virgin Mary descends upon the tomb of S. Mercurius, and directs him how to avenge the christian blood shed by Julian's order³. The emperor enters, attended by astrologers, who warn him of his fate. The shade of S. Mercurius issues from his sepulchre, and wounds Julian mortally, in the midst of his guards. He retires, declaring, that Christ had vanquished.

O Cristo Galileo tu ai pur vinto !

It will, I fear, be thought that I have dwelt too long upon this rude drama. But I was chiefly induced to enter into this minute analysis, in order to shew, that either through policy, or a deference to the depraved taste of the times, the author took for his model⁴ the irregular drama then in use, while it is natural to conclude, from his subsequent attempt, that he was not insensible

³ The rubric, or marginal direction, in this place, is, "La Virgine Maria apparisce sopra la sepultura di Santo Mercurio, e dice."

⁴ This model seems to have been followed by Galeotto Carretto in the composition of his *Sopbonista*, which Sig. Signorelli considers as the first tragedy written in the lingua

volgare. *Tom. iii. p. 103. Hist. Mem. on It. Trag. p. 9.* It is, in fact, an historical drama. It was written (1502) during the prevalence of the rappresentazione, or sacred drama, whose form it evidently affects. The edition which I possess, and which was printed in *Ven. 1546*, was, I believe, the first and only edition.

to the simple charms of the ancient stage: It is to the age, therefore, not to the author, we are to attribute the superabundance of incident, the violation of the unities of time and place, and the absurd machinery which disgrace this production of one of the brightest ornaments of the fifteenth century. Another end may be answered by the minuteness of the analysis for which I am apologizing. It not only presents the reader with a faithful delineation of the form of that species of drama, intitled, "Rappresentazione;" but, in doing so, exhibits a comprehensive view of the state of the Italian stage at the period under consideration.

Before we dismiss the drama under review, we shall observe, that the music which the angel desires should be heard with mute attention, was, probably, the composition of Henry Isaac, or, as the Italians called him, Arrigo Tedesco, master of the chapel of San Giovanni in Florence, and a musician in high estimation at this time. As it may be presumed from his situation, that he superintended the musical education of the Compagnia del Vangelista, and as he had been employed by Lorenzo to set to music the first of the canti carnascialeschi⁵, it is no vague conjecture

⁵ May it not be also presumed, from Arrigo's close intimacy with Lorenzo, and his friend and domestic tutor Politiano, that he conducted the musical part of the education of Lorenzo's children; and that it

to suppose, that he was the composer employed on this occasion. Perhaps this conjecture may be allowed to receive support from a slight coincidence: the song, or air, to which we allude, was, says Il Lasca, *composta a tre voci*⁶; and the only song in the drama before us, is a trio also. It would seem, that the vocal compositions, in parts, of Arrigo, were generally calculated for three voices⁷; for it was not till after his time, says Il Lasca, that the number of parts, in such compositions, was increased to four⁸. Arrigo was best known as a composer of sacred music; as one who, according to Glareanus, “*maximè Ecclesiasticum ornavit cantum*”⁹. Besides the patronage of Lorenzo, he enjoyed the friendship of Politiano, who makes frequent and honourable mention of him in his letters.

was under his tuition Leo's passion for music was strengthened, and his skill in that enchanting art acquired.

⁶ *Tutti Triomp.* &c. *Cosm.* 1750, p. 41. Trios, at this early period, were madrigals in three parts, and, it would seem, a prevailing form of vocal composition. When Rinaldo entered the palace, “*chiamato Gioiolo*,” he found a bevy of beauties, and

Tre cantavano insieme, ed una sonava

Un' istromento.

Orl. Inn. lib. 1. cant. 8.

⁷ Some specimens of Arrigo's sacred music are given in Dr. Burney's *Hist. of Music*, vol. ii. p. 518; but of

his secular compositions, it is supposed, there does not a vestige remain.

⁸ Dr. Burney informs me, that the first secular music printed after the invention of the press, were short airs in four parts, to pleasant and facetious songs, *alla Napolitana*. These were sung, in parts, in the streets, as *serenate*, *nocturni*, or *mattinate*; and were, perhaps, sometimes adopted in the vocal accompaniments of *rappresentazioni*. It was certainly to such lively airs that the *Laudi*, or *Canticos*, of the *Laudisti*, were sung, probably with a view to stimulating the languid devotion of the hearers.

⁹ ΔΙΔΑΚΤΟΡΑΟΝ. *Bes.* 1547, p. 460.

But it was not only in writing a *Rappresentazione*, that Lorenzo appeared to study the indulgence of the depraved taste of his age. Vasari ascribes to him the invention of a species of Pageant, or popular Pantomime, interspersed with songs, intitled, *LA MASCHERATA*¹; a kind of spectacle, which might be denominated a Mute Morality, from the circumstance of its being usually composed of allegorical personages. Of this description was "*Il Carto della Morte*," a celebrated pageant, which would seem to have been the production of a genius not less gloomy and sublime than that of Dante². It was for such public shows, or spectacles, the *Canti Carnascialeschi*³, collected and published by Antonio Grazzini, detto il Lasca, were written.

¹ *Vasari*, t. iv. p. 232. This kind of spectacle, which prevailed very early in England, was distinguished by our old writers by the name of *Pageants*. Mr. Warton supposes, that the Pageants, in which allegory was rendered visible, contributed, in a considerable degree, to make Spenser an allegorical poet. *Poet. ii.* p. 89. The same ingenious writer infers, from the infrequency of symbolical beings in the *Orl. Furioso*, that Ariosto wanted the advantage of this mode of enriching the fancy. *P. 92.* Such an advantage, however, Ariosto certainly did not want. Indeed, it might be easily proved, that he enjoyed it in a greater degree of perfection than the English poet. But his poem is not, like the *Fairy Queen*, a continued allegory: his personifications of the virtues

and vices are only occasional embellishments. His masks are interlarded.

It is asserted by Varillat, that a representation of the first pageant exhibited by Lorenzo de' Medici might be seen, in his time, in a MS. of the French king's library, enriched with noble figures. "It is," says he, "the combat of Hercules, and of the other heroes that assisted at the nuptials of Pithou, against the Centaurs." *Book. iii.* We are told by the same historian, that Lorenzo had the three *Trions* of Petrarcha exhibited, with suitable pageantry, during three successive years.

² *Vasari*, t. ii. p. 77. As this Pageant, for the reason given in the text, has some affinity with any subject, I shall give a plate to a description of it in my appendix No. viii.

³ *Cosm.* 1750.

V. **IT** will probably be expected, that I should devote a section to that species of drama known on the English stage by the denomination of **MORALITIES**, and upon the stage of Italy under the various titles of **OPERE MORALE**, **FAVOLE MORALE**, and **COMEDIE TROPOLOGICHE** ⁴. But as I am unwilling to entangle either the reader or myself in the web of allegory, I shall pass lightly and hastily over this part of my subject. Indeed I find little inducement to linger; for the Moralities, or allegorical dramas, falling within the limits of my plan, which have occurred in the course of my researches, seem to me almost too insignificant in number, or in merit, to demand a particular department. It was in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries ⁵, (a period to which our present inquiries do not extend) that the reign, or rather the despotism, of Allegory commenced, infecting with its pestiferous influence every region of Parnassus; reducing substances to shadows, and withering the laurels which adorned the brow of genius. Allegory was not, however, without its votaries, among the early Italian poets; but when they reduced it to action, it was generally for the purpose of rendering it vi-

⁴ This denomination is given by the author Desiderio Cini di Pistoia, to his *Desiderio e Speranza Fantastichi*, printed at Ven. 1607.

intituled, *Opere Morale, Favole Morale, Tragedie Politico-Morale*, all of which are allegorical dramas, and generally of the seventeenth century.

⁵ Alacci enumerates several pieces,

fible in Pageants. At the dawn of literature in modern Europe, several allegorical dialogues were, it is true, composed in Italy, on the model of the Provençal poetry, which, as Mr. Ritson observes, abounded chiefly in allegory and satire⁶. But these pieces were not, in general, written with a view to the stage, although some of them bear the title of *Comedy*, a term which was formerly of a signification much more extensive than that which it bears at present; "It regarded simply the external form; it was properly applied to every poem composed in dialogue, provided that throughout the whole, the conversation was carried on by the characters themselves, without the intervention of the poet⁷." Of this nature were the "*Divina Commedia*" of Dante, and the "*Ameto*" of Boccaccio. To this equivocal class, the "*Tempio d'Amore*," and "*Le Nozze de Psyche e Cupidine*" of Galeotto del Carretto, bear some affinity; but being animated with action, and having each a plot, they may be admitted into the class of Moralities. As such, therefore, we shall briefly notice them.

Of the "*Tempio d'Amore*"⁸ some idea may

⁶ Vid. *Diff. on Rom. and Minstrel.* prefixed to *Anc. Eng. Met. Rom.* vol. i. p. 50.

⁷ Bishop Leath, *Less. on the Sacred Poet. of the Hebrews*, *Less.* xxx.

⁸ Milan, 1519. The edition printed at Ven. 1524, is embellished with a frontispiece, exhibiting a concert,

consisting of eight performers, each of whom plays on a different instrument. This edition, (which I possess) I once erroneously supposed to be the first. *Hif. Mem. on It. Trag.* p. 11. note (c). Tiraboschi undecceived me.

be formed from the following passage at the beginning of the argument ;

Phileno per cagion d'un suo rivale
 Dal suo signor Amor bandito a torto,
 Narra a Memoria el ricevuto male.
 Torna Speranza, qual in spatio corto
 Promette farli haver el tempo optato :
 Di'l che se prende l'anima sconsorto,
 Poi vien la Fama, &c.

Phileno, by a rival's hated art,
 From the blest bands of happy love exil'd,
 To Memory tells his deep corroding smart ;
 But Hope returning, sooths, with accents mild,
 And in soft whispers reassures his heart.
 That sudden joy his mental gloom shall gild;
 Fame next appears, &c.

The interlocutors in this piece are multitudinous; they amount to forty-two ! all of whom, except Phileno, are allegorical beings. I shall not weary the reader with an analysis of this drama, but I shall take this occasion to observe, that in the dialogue which ensues, when l'Accoglienza, la Benignità, l'Amicizia, and l'Integrità, enter the scene, a translation of the " Table of Cebes" is introduced. As a further specimen of the versification of Galeotto, I shall transcribe the version of that part of the table which Mr. Thyer sup-

[rog]

poets suggested to Milton the thought contained in the two concluding lines of *Comus* ⁹.

AMIC.

Deh dinne anchor de grátia se'l te pare,
El nome delle due belle sorelle,
Che quelli in alto sforzansi tirare.

ACCO.

Costanza, e Continenza ha nome quelle
Che danno audacia e valida fortezza
A le predette ascise anime belle:
E con triumpho e maxima allegrezza,
Mostran la strada che conduce al loco
Lieto, beato, e pien dogni dolcezza.

From the stage-directions to this drama, we learn, that, on some occasions, the musical accompaniment to poetic declamation upon the stage, was, at this period, confined to symphonies played at the close of each stanza. *Servitù canta el seguente capitolo per camino, e la Memoria sona col Zuffolo de terzetto in terzetto*. If the music was appropriate, it must have served to impress the sentiment expressed in the poetry, while the pause afforded rest and relief to the actor. To this practice, therefore, praise cannot be totally denied.

“ *Le Nozze de Psyche e Cupidine*,” which is

⁹ Vid. *The Poet. Works of J. Milton*, Lond. 1801, edited by the Rev. Mr. Todd, vol. v. p. 480.

¹ Milan, 1520. My copy of this drama is without date, or name of place. It had formerly been in the very curious collection of the late

Alexander Mangin, Esq. of Dublin. United with it is another very scarce piece, intitled, *Gaudio d'Amore*, (Ven. 1521) a comedy by Notturmo Napolitano, concerning whom vid. *Tiraboschi, Stor. della Poes. Ital. Lond.* 1803, vol. ii. p. 228—230.

founded upon the well-known tale of Apuleius², seems to be a Morality of the mixed kind. The plot is not entirely, or even principally, conducted by allegorical beings; but such beings are occasionally introduced. It is, in fact, a mythological drama; yet it cannot be justly excluded from the class of Moralities. This little piece abounds in incident. It is divided into acts, between which a chorus sing odes and canzonets³. When Cupid and Psyche are borne upon the wings of Zephyrs into the palace of Love, the chorus sing, unseen, a canzone, beginning,

Veni sposa e qui possiede
El bel regno, &c.

In the third act, Pan is introduced, modulating a canzone to his reeds. In fact, these little pieces may be numbered with the earliest attempts at the Melo-drama. We find in both dramas musical declamation; but of the style or nature of the music we must ever remain ignorant. If, however, it may be presumed, that the composer paid due attention to such words as were capable

² *De Asino Aureo*, lib. iv. v. vi.

³ It is but justice to Calceotto to observe, that the chorus in this little piece is often happily, and never impertinently, employed. In noticing a chorus in an allegorical drama, we are naturally reminded, that the Greek tragedians are supposed to be

indebted for their chorus to the oldest allegorical drama extant,—the *Song of Solomon*; an origin which is certainly more consonant to the mild and moral nature of that chorus, than the cart of Thespis besmeared with the lees of wine.

of intonation, and managed the base accordingly, a kind of recitative must naturally have been produced. So that probably Peri, who has been long esteemed the inventor of that species of composition ⁴, only employed the hand of taste and skill in improving an imperfect model.

Having formerly had occasion ⁵ to mention Galeotto as a tragic writer, we shall waive any biographical notices of him here; but we shall allot a niche to the picture of himself, which he has drawn, with a modest pencil, in his "Tempio d'Amore." L'Accoglienza having expatiated to l'Amicizia upon the series of portraits of the Italian poets, with which the temple of Love is adorned, stops before that of Galeotto, and says,

Quel altro è Galeotto dal Carretto,
Qual va coliendo li candenti lauri
Delle ghirlande di quel chor eletto.

E a l'odor di quei par che restauri
L'alma affannata, ch' imparar in fuda
Quella virtù, che val tanti thesauri.

A ciò ch' el santo Apollo un dì l'inchiuda
Nel bel collegio di questi alti viri,
Al cui segno alto ad arivarse fuda.

Guarda come el Fregoso con desiri
Par che l'inviti entrar nel choro degno,
E come in dietro con rubor se tiri,
Si come quel che par gli efferne indegno.

⁴ Algarotti, *Saggio sopra l'opera in musica*, p. 27. | ⁵ *Hist. Mem. on B. Trag.* p. 23.

See Galeotto here, Caretto's pride!

Whose hand selects among the chosen train,
Those scatter'd leaves for deathless bards supply'd,

Whose scent ambrosial chace internal pain
From those who strive to learn the mystic lore
With which the wealth of Mammon vies in vain.

Sooth'd with the hope, that on Castalia's shore,
He yet may join the choir, by Phoebus led,
Of those whom deathless toils had rais'd before.

See how the good Regoso calls him on
To fill his station in the tuneful band,
And courts the modest stranger, hardly won,
Amid the muses choir to claim his stand.

*

According to Tiraboschi, Galeotto died in
1527⁶.

VI. **STRUCK** with the many gross absurdities of the *Rappresentazione*, the prevailing species of drama of his time, Lorenzo de' Medici secretly meditated a reform in the Italian stage. "With this view, he proposed," says his elegant biographer, "to substitute the deities of Greece and Rome, for the saints and martyrs of the Christian church." Of his attempt to carry this plan into execution, a fragment of an unfinished poem, intitled, "Amori

⁶ Although the life of Galeotto extended to the sixteenth century, he may be numbered with the writers who flourished in the fifteenth. His *Sanista*, says Tiraboschi, "fu compolta verso il 1502."

de Veneri e Marte," still remains. From this, indeed, it would seem, that the author meant to confine himself entirely to pagan mythology. But whether or not the whole piece was to have turned on the amours of Mars and Venus, we cannot determine: probably it was only intended to introduce the subject episodically in a larger work, as a corrective to a crime still too prevalent in Italy,—infidelity to the marriage-bed. As a specimen of this precious fragment, which Mr. Roscoe rescued from oblivion, I shall transcribe Apollo's exclamation on observing Mars and Venus in amorous dalliance.

Inguria è grande al letto romper fede ;
Non sia chi pecchi, e di', chi 'l sapra mai ?
Che 'l sol, le stelle, el ciel, la luna il vede.

Dire deed of violated faith !
No soul that sins can 'scape the wrath
Of Jove. Howe'er conceal'd,
Phœbus himself the fault declares,
Diana tells it to the stars
O'er all heaven's azure field.

*

But the amiable author defeats, in a great degree, his own purpose, by the wanton manner in which he makes his heroine prepare for the reception of her lover, and by the lascivious warmth with which her invitation glows.

Marte, se oscur ancor ti paron l'ore,
 Vienne al mio dolce ospizio, ch'io t'aspetto;
 Vulcan non v'è, che ci disturbi amore.

Vien, ch'io t'invito nuda in mezzo il letto,
 Non indugiar, ch' el tempo passa, e vola,
 Coperto m'ho di fior vermigli il petto⁷.

Come soldier ! if the hand of night
 Has clos'd the curtains to thy mind;
 No husband here, with jealous spite,
 My dark retreat shall ever find.

O come, my soldier, to my arms.—
 Away ! the winged hours fly.
 See how the rose improves my charms,
 And sweetly scents the bower of joy.

✱

Here the Venus of Lorenzo glows like that of Titian. Homer is more modest in his description : he even makes the goddesses stand coyly aloof from the sight of the insnared lovers.

⁷ Perhaps the following lines in his friend Politiano's beautiful unfinished *Stanza per la Giostra del Magnifico Giuliano di Piero de' Medici*, furnished Lorenzo with the brilliant colours which he employed in this description :

Trovolla affisa in letto fuor del lembo,
 Pur mò di Marte sciolta dalle braccia,
 Il qual rovescio le giaceva in grembo
 Pascendo gli occhi pur della sua faccia.
 Di rose sopra lor pioveva un nembo

Per rinnovargli all' amerosa traccia :
 Ma Vener dava a lui con voglie pronte,
 Mille baci negli occhi, e nella fronte.

Lib. I. f. 122.

Gravina cannot surely be accused of bestowing extravagant praise on these *Stanze*, when he calls them, "maravigliose ottave !" *Della Reg. Post. lib. II. cap. 32.* One of the most elegant and most correct editions of the *Stanze* of Politiano, is that edited by the abate Seraffi, and printed at Bergamo, 1747.

While Lorenzo was thus secretly preparing to reform the Italian stage by precept and example, a similar idea seems to have arisen in the youthful mind of Ariosto. "His father yet living," (says his biographer and translator) "he translated the tale of Pyramus and Thisbe into verse, making, in a manner, a comedie of it, and so caused his brothers and sisters to play it⁸." This circumstance is likewise mentioned by Pigna, who adds, that Ariosto composed several other little dramatic pieces in his childhood, which were also performed by his own family⁹. It is probable that, on these occasions, the poet himself took a part, as we learn from the prologue to the "Scolastica¹," that he exhibited some of his

⁸ Harrington, *Orl. Fur.* p. 415. *London*. 1591.

⁹ *Vita*, prefixed to *Orl. Fur.* *Ven.* 1603.

¹ This comedy, which was left unfinished by the author, was completed by his brother Gabriele, who modestly pretends, in the prologue, that he was stimulated to the bold undertaking by the shade of his brother, who appeared, "in sonno," to him,

in abito

Che s'era dimostrato su'l proscenio
Nostro più volte, e recitar principii,
E qualche volta a sostener il carico
Della Comedia, &c.

I shall embrace this occasion to observe, that the comedies of Ariosto were originally represented in his house in Ferrara, in the apartment now distinguished by his bust.

In this house, (which the liberality of Alfonso enabled him to build, and which, according to Jovius, was "urbanam domum, peramenum hortorum ubertate,") not only the comedies, but the satires, and the *Orl. Furioso*, of this enchanting poet, were written. When I visited it in 1792, it was falling to decay; but there still remained in the garden a small bower, in which Ariosto was wont to hold converse with his muse, and which I hope my readers will do me the justice to believe I did not explore "indifferent or unmoved." For further particulars of this house, vid. *Hist. Mem. on Ital. Trag.* p. 138, note (-) and the full and elegant *Life of Ariosto*, prefixed to Mr. Hoole's translation of the *Orl. Fur.* a work which is so generally known and admired, that it precludes the necessity of my entering into any detail of the life of this poet.

own characters on the stage erected by his patron Alfonso.

But it was reserved for Angelo Poliziano, the friend of Lorenzo de' Medici, and the tutor of his immortal son, Leo X, to educe from his brilliant and fertile imagination, before he had reached the age of eighteen, a Pastoral Drama, for which he had no model, but which was not only to serve as the prototype of that elegant species of comedy, but to give birth to the modern imitation of the Greek tragedy. This little piece, so beautiful in itself, and so happy in the effects it produced, is intitled "Orfeo." As it is yet almost totally unknown to the English reader, I shall analyze it with minuteness, and be prodigal of specimens. The edition which I shall chiefly

² It is a very extraordinary fact, that a production which does so much honour to Italy, should be so little known as to escape the notice of Fontanini, Maym, and the compiler of the *Italian library*. Riccoboni never saw a copy. *Hist. du Theat. Ital.* t. 2. p. 143. To Ap. Zeno it must have been familiar; yet he does not mention it in his elaborate notes on the *Elég. Ital.* But Crescimbeni and Tiraboschi have made honourable mention of this charming little piece: and Quadrio gives the following account of its various editions: "Agnolo Poliziano, come quegli, che morì l'anno 1494, fu il primo, per quanto si sappia, che trattasse boscherecci argomenti in forma da mettersi in scena. La sua favola, intitolata *Orfeo*, fu stampata da prima senza l'anno dell'

edizioni. Di poi fu ristampata in Venezia per Nicolo Zoppino nel 1524." Quadrio does not seem to have known, that the first dated edition of the *Orfeo* appeared at Venice, 1513. And Baretti, with his usual inaccuracy, refers the second edition to the year 1524; but he adds, with so much truth, that "the learned themselves (of Italy) scarcely know the existence of that performance." *Acc. of the mann. and. cust. of Italy*, vol. I. p. 181. One of the reasons which induced the translator of the *Cyclops* of Euripides to subjoin this little drama to his version so late as 1749, was "la somma rarità del componimento che siccome spesso ritrovarsi ricordato, così assai di rado giunge alle mani di coloro che delle primizie delle Toscane muse san vaghi." *Pad.* 1749.

follow, is that given in the "*Coste volgare del celeberrimo Messer Angelo Politiano, nouamente impresse*," printed at Venice in 1513³, as it would seem to contain this little drama, not only in the exact form in which the author sent it to his friend Carlo Canale, but that in which it was originally represented. I shall, at the same time, notice, as I proceed, the variations in the edition which appeared at Parma in 1776, and which is said to be given, as extracted, for the first time, from two old copies, and reduced to its pristine integrity and perfection⁴. In this edition, the original title of "*Festa*" is changed into "*Favola Tragica*;" and the division of acts adopted. Of this division I shall only give marginal indications, preserving, in my analysis, the first form, or rapid course, of the ancient *Festa*.

³ *Stampato in Pencil per Lorenzo di Rusconi, Milanese. del m.ccccc.xiii, a di xx. de Mayo.* The *Stanze*, and some *canzone*, of the author, are given in this edition. An edition prior to this, appeared *senza l'anno*, and with the following title, *La rappresentatione della Favola d'Orfeo*. The editions of *Nizza* (without date) and *Paris 1749*, are printed after that of 1513, without any variation, except in the orthography, which is

modernized, and the omission of an indecent passage, which we shall notice elsewhere.

⁴ *L'Orfeo tragedia di Messer Angelo Politiano tratta per la prima volta da due vetusti codici, ed alla sua integrità e perfezione ridotto ed illustrata.* This edition, which was printed from the original MSS. discovered by P. Affò, a cordelier, in the library of his order in Reggio, is followed in the *Parma. Ed.* i. xvii.

LA FESTA DI ORPHEO.

ACT I. MERCURY enters, enjoins silence, and delivers the argument in a short prologue⁵. A shepherd desires the audience to pay due attention to the celestial messenger. Mopsus, an old shepherd, then enters, inquiring of Aristeus, who appears seated near a fountain, whether he has seen a young calf, which he describes. Aristeus replies, that he has not seen the calf; but observes, that he had lately heard the herds lowing behind the adjacent mountain. The poet thus artfully contrives to present to the reader's imagination a scene highly pastoral,—a fountain at the foot of a mountain, with lowing herds browsing at a little distance⁶. Aristeus invites Mopsus to remain; then pointing to a cavern under the mountain, he relates that he had there seen

⁵ To this prologue is added, in the modern edition, the following couplet:

Or stia ciascun a tutti gli Atti intento,
Che cinque sono, e questo è l'argomento.

In this edition it is not said by whom the argument is delivered; but in that of 1513, we are told "Mercurio annuntia la Festa." In fact, Mercury was so generally the

protatic personage to the early secular Italian dramas, that the Foletto, or Sprite, that recites the prologue to the *Vaccaria* of Ruzzanti, (*Ven.* 1565) thinks it necessary to apologise for usurping his office.

⁶ This is not the only instance which the writings of Politiano afford of his excellence in pastoral description. See his sweetly-simple *Seftina irregolare*, so charmingly translated by Dr. Aikin. *Poems. Lond.* 1791, p. 128.

Una nympha più bella che Diana.

A nymph more lovely than the sylvan queen,

of whom he became instantly enamoured. Having described the effects of this passion, Mopsus warns him against its indulgence ; and concludes with assuring him, that if he should yield to its despotic sway, it would totally withdraw his attention from all the important concerns of life ⁷. Aristeus declares, that his advice and admonitions are vain, for he is determined to indulge his passion for this unknown nymph ; and then desires him to sit in the shade, and accompany his voice with his zampogna, or pipe, while he sings the following song, which he hopes will induce his mistress to approach ;

CANZONA.

Udite, selve, mie dolci parole,
Poichè la nympha mia udir non vuole,
La bella nympha è sorda al mio lamento.

El suon di nostra fistula non cura;
Di ciò si lagna el mio cornuto armento,
Nè vuol bagnare il griffo in acqua pura,

⁷ This admonition of Mopsus will remind the reader of some passages in Thomson's *Spring*; particularly from *l.* 980—985. | wild and irregular passion of love,

Nè vuol toccar la tenera verdura^a ;
Tanto del suo pastore gl' incresce e dolo.
Uditè, selve, mie dolci parole, &c.

Ben si cura l'armento del pastore,
La' nympha non si cura delló amante,
Ea bella nympha, che di saxo ha il core,
Anzi di ferro, anzi di diamante ;
Ella fugge da me sempre davantè,
Come agnello dal lupo fuggir suole.
Uditè, selve, mie dolci parole, &c.

Digli, zampogna mia, com'è via fugge
Con gli ami insieme la bell'età sacra ;
Et digli come el tempo ne distrugge,
Nè l'età persa mai si rinovella ;
Digli che sappi usar sua forma bella,
Che sempre mai non sòn rose nè viole^b.
Uditè, selve, mie dolci parole, &c.

Portati, venti, questi dolci versi,
Dentro all' orecchie della nympha mia ;
Dite quant' io per lei lachryme versi,
E lei pregate che crudel non sia :
Dite che la mia vita fugge via,
E si consuma come brina al sole.
Uditè, selve, mie dolci parole ;
Poiché la nympha mia udir non vuole.

^a Politiano, whose mind teemed with classic lore, may be supposed to have recollected the following passage of Virgil; when he wrote these lines :

nulla neque annem
Libavit quadrupes, nec graminis at-
tigit herbam.

Ecl. v. l. 25.

^b The prevailing idea in this stanza has been borrowed and beautifully amplified by Tasso. *Ger. Lib. cant. xvi. st. 13.* And the words of Tasso would seem to have been closely translated by Spenser. *Book ii. cant. xii. st. 73.* But *st. 23. in cant. i. of the Ort. Inn.* renders it doubtful to whom the praise of originality is due; whether to Boiardo or Politiano.

[315]

O hear, ye woods! my tender strains,
For, ah! my nymph the lay disdains;
The beauteous nymph, who scorns to heed
My fond complaint, my tuneful reed.

My horned herds bewail her pride;
They cease to crop the grassy plains;
They cease to sip th' unsullied tide,
In pity of their shepherd's pains.

O hear, ye woods! my tender strains, &c.

The flock can for its shepherd care;
My tortures cannot touch the fair;
The beauteous fair, whose heart is rock,
Or steel, which no soft touch retains:
As from the wolf retreats the flock,
She flies me, and my grief disdains.

O hear, ye woods! my tender strains, &c.

Tell her, my pipe, that beauty gay
On time's fleet wing retires away;
Tell her, since age decrees its doom,
And spring-time it no more regains;
To prize her form, while yet its bloom
The violet and rose retains.

O hear, ye woods! my tender strains, &c.

O hear, ye winds! this tuneful lay,
And drop it in my fair one's ear:
What tears I shed for her, ah! stay,
And bid her cease to be severe;
Tell her, my life consumes away,
Like dew-drops in the beam of day.

Hear, oh ye woods! my tender strains,
For, ah! my nymph the song disdains.

While Mopsus is praising the singing of Aristeus, he is interrupted by Tyrfis, who, entering hastily, describes a nymph whom he had just seen gathering flowers at the foot of the mountain, who had more the appearance of a celestial than a terrestrial being ; and adds,

Et parla e canta in sì dolce favella,
Che fiumi svolgerebbe inverso el fonte.

So soft her gentle accents met the ear,
Loud echoing torrents turn'd their course, to hear ¹.

Aristeus supposes this to be his mistress ; and, despising the cautions of Mopsus, determines to go in quest of her, begging, at the same time, that this venerable shepherd would wait his return. While Mopsus and Tyrfis converse on the baneful effects of love, Eurydice runs across the stage, pursued by Aristeus, singing,

ACT. II. Non mi fuggir, donzella ;
Ch'io ti son tanto amico,
Et che più t'amo che la vita e'l core.

Ascolta, o nympha bella,
Ascolta quel ch'io dico :
Non fuggir, nympha, ch'io ti porto amore.

¹ In a pastoral poem by a contemporary of Politiano, the soft accents of a nymph have an effect very different, but equally wonder-

ful;—they occasion a battle of the winds.

— pugnin spesso per udirla i venti.
La Ninf. Tib. del Molza. Berg. 1747.

Non son quì lupo od orfo ;
 Ma son tuo amatore ;
 Dunque raffrena el tuo volante corfo.

Poi che 'l preghar non vale,
 Et tu via ti dilegui,
 El convien ch'io ti segui,
 Porgimi, Amor, porgimi hor le tue ale.

Turn thee, gentle maid, again ;
 Fly not thus thy faithful swain !
 Thee I prize, sweet maid, above
 The pulse that warms my heart with love.
 Gentle nymph attend my pray'r,
 Let it not be lost in air.

Fly not thus with causeless fear :
 Naught but gentle love is here.
 No rude mountain bear am I ;
 Not a famish'd wolf is nigh.
 Why then thus, mistaken maid,
 Fly your love with panting dread !

But, since fervent pray'rs are vain,
 Since you fly your faithful swain,
 Still your steps I mean to trace.—
 Cupid ! aid a lover's chase ;
 Waft me on your wings away,
 Nor let me lose the lovely prey.

*

In the edition of 1776, a dryad, on the departure of Aristeus, announces the death of Eurydice to a chorus of her sister-dryads, who, in a choral ode, extol her personal charms, and lament

her fate². The choriphea then observing Orpheus approaching with his lyre in his hand, desires the rest to retire, while she communicates to him the melancholy intelligence. But in the
 ACT. III, edition which we follow, Orpheus, without any preparation, appears sitting on a mountain, singing to his lyre the following Latin ode, which, we are told, was written at the request of Messer Baccio Ugolino, (the actor who exhibited the part) in compliment to 'Cardinal Gonzaga', at whose desire the drama was composed, and in whose presence it was performed.

O meos longum modulata iusus,
 Quos amor primam docuit juventam,
 Fleste nunc mecum numeros, novumque
 Dic, lyra, carmen.

² M. Landi says this ode "is a comedy of *Tempo de Amore*, Ven. 1524. L'altra è del Belinson, che concorrenza e Pecc'a Baccio Ugolin, che gli sta alato, Homo preclaro e pien d'alta eloquenza.

³ "Orpheo, cantando sopra il monte, in su la lyra, gli seguenti versi Latini; li quali a proposito di Messer Baccio Ugolino, attore di detta persona d'Orpheo, sono in honore del Cardinale Mantuano," &c. "The personal obligations of Baccio to the cardinal," says Mr. Roscoe, "occasioned the introduction of the beautiful Latin ode, in which, by a singular exertion of the *quidlibet audenti*, the Theban bard is introduced singing the praises of the cardinal." Vol. i. p. 303, 4to. Baccio is introduced by Galeotto del Carretto amongst the poets whose portraits adorn the temple of Love, in his

The Belinson mentioned in those lines, was Bernardo Bellincioni of Florence, the intimate friend of Baccio, and, like him, a celebrated improvvisatore. He died in 1491. In 1493, a *Raccolta*, or collection of his poems, was published at Milan. In this collection are given two sonnets on the death of Alessandro Ciniucci, by Baccio, under the name of Baccio Fiorentino. He also contributed to a collection of *Rime* by several hands, printed by Rustoni at Venice in the beginning of the sixteenth century.

Non quod hirsutos agat huc leones;
Sed quod, et frontem domini serenet,
Et levet curas, penitusque doctas
Mulceat aures.

Vindicat nostros sibi iure cantus
Qui colit vates citharamque princeps,
Ille cui sacro rufus refulget
Crine Galerus :

Ille cui flagrans triplici corona
Cinget auratam diadema frontem.
Fallor ? an vati bonus hæc canenti
Dictat Apollo ?

Phœbe, quæ dictas, rata fac, precamur.
Dignus est nostræ dominus Thalæe,
Cui celer versa quat Hermus uni
Aureus urna :

Cui tuas mittat, Cytherea, conchas
Conscius primi, Phaetontis Indus :
Ipsa cui dives properet beatum
Copia cornu.

Quippe non gazam pavidus repositam
Servat Ææo similia draconi ;
Sed vigil famam secat, ac perenni
Imminet ævo.

Ipsa Phœbeæ vacat aula turbe,
Dulcior blandis Heliconis umbris :
Et vocans doctes patet ampla toto
Janua posse.

Sic refert magnæ titulis superbum
Stemma Gonzagæ recidiva virtus,
Gaudet et fastos superare avitos
Æmulus hæres.

Scilicet stirpem generosa succo
Poma commendant : timidamque numquam
Vulturem fœto Jovis acer ales
Extudit ovo.

Curre jam toto violentus amœ,
O sacris Minci celebrate musis,
Ecce Mæcenæ tibi nunc, Maroque
Contigit tui.

Jamque vicinas tibi subdat undas
Vel Padus multo resonans olere,
Quamlibet flentes animosus alnos,
Astraque jactet.

Candidas ergo volucres notârat
Mantuum condens Tiberinus Ocnus,
Nempe quem Parcæ docuit benignæ
Conscia mater ⁴.

Resounding to the sportive song
Which Love had taught my youthful tongue,
O Lyre! salute the list'ning throng
With soft, unusual strain.

Not that which checks the lion's rage,
But what your master's care may 'suage,
And with soft magic disengage
His mind from mental pain.

The poet's patrœn claims the lay,
Whose fiery helm diffuses day,
And bright his beamy tressles play
Along the heavenly vault.

⁴ The learned reader will perceive, that an air of obscurity pervades this ode, particularly towards the conclusion. But several brilliant rays of the transcendent genius which illumineatd the mind of the author, break through the cloud which envelopes it. These rays have been caught by my friend Mr. Boyd, and judiciously diffused through the spirited version with which he has favoured me.

Riding sublime the rolling spheres,
A triple crown of light he wears.—
I dream,—or soaring fancy hears
His strain, by rapture caught !

O Phoebus ! sanctify my theme ;
My patron claims a god's esteem ;
Even Heræus, with his golden stream,
His merits scarce could pay.

O Venus ! from thy pearly cave,
For him enrich the Indian wave,
And with bright gems its bosom pave,
That meets the rising ray.

May plenty flow, with current free ;
For, not like *Æte's* dragon, he
Keeps, with a misery's penury,
From use the golden hoard.

But, fix'd on fame, his eagle eye
Views the long ages passing by,
Each doom'd a tribute to supply
To Mantua's mitred lord.

Yonder the masters of the song
His palace crowd, a grateful throng ;
Not where Castalia winds along
They meet a kinder home.

Renaſcent virtue there ſurveyſ
His fire's renown in antient days,
And tries on bolder wings to raiſe
Her glories yet to come.

On great Gonzaga's lofty bough
Degenerate fruit can never grow ;
An eagle's neſt can never ſhew
The vulture's ravening kind.

Mincio unlock your sacred springs ;
 Assembled muse tune your strings ;
 Mæcenas rules, and Mæro sings,
 In Mantua's lord combin'd.

Proud Po ! content with second praise,
 To Mincio now resign the bays,
 Tho' all your swans, with tuneful lays,
 With Mantua's music vie.

Tho' breathing thro' her poplars pale,
 And alder copse that skirts the gale,
 Soft Zephyr, from her airy dale,
 With murmur bland reply.

In vain her radiant track on high,
 Winding along the ambient sky,
 She boasts, where stellar-fires supply
 Her channel pav'd with stars.

The milk-white choirs that haunt the shore
 The fruitless contest now give o'er,
 And Po, with Mincio, now no more
 The tuneful garland shares.

*

In the edition of 1776, this noble ode yields its place to the verses in praise of Hercules, which are supposed to have given birth to the Infant Hercules of Sir Joshua Reynolds⁵.

⁵ If Sir Joshua Reynolds borrowed the idea from Politiano, it is to be lamented that he departed from the simplicity of the poet's design. The crowd of spectators with which his piece is filled, not only draws off the attention from the main subject, but distracts it. Zeuxis limited the number of the witnesses of the wonderful deed to the two persons most interested, — Amphitrion and Alcmena. And the affrighted nurse is the only person introduced by Plautus, to enliven the picture which his narrative presents. But if Sir Joshua has overcharged his subject, he has made ample amends by the ' magnitude,' ' the crushing grasp,' and ' the energy of will,' which his mighty child displays.

Musa, triumphales titulos, et gesta canamus
 Herculis, et forti monstra subacta manu.
 Ut timidæ matri pressos ostenderit angues,
 Intrepidusque fero riserit ore puer.

The glorious titles and triumphal name
 Of great Alcides, give, O Muse! to fame.
 How the twin-snake, by jealous Juno fir'd,
 Long struggling in his infant grasp expired,
 While to his mother, with victorious smile,
 He shew'd the trophies of his early toil.

At the conclusion of the foregoing ode, a
 shepherd enters, and announces the death of
 Eurydice, simply relating the cause, without de-
 scribing any of the attending circumstances.
 Orpheus again strikes his lyre, and sweetly la-
 ments her death, concluding with a determina-

⁶ On this occasion Rinuccini im-
 proves both on Virgil and Politiano.
 He thus beautifully describes the
 death of Eurydice.

la bella Euridice
 Movea danzando il piè su 'l verde
 prato,
 Quando ria forte acerba
 Angue crudo, e spietato,
 Che celato giacea tra fiori, e l'erba
 Punse il piè con sì sanguinante,
 Ch' impallidi repente
 Come raggio di sol che nube adom-
 bri,
 E dal profondo core
 Con un sospir mortale,
 Si spaventoso ohime, sospinse fore
 Che quasi haveffe l'ale
 Giunse ogni ninfa al doloroso suono,
 Et ella in abbandono
 Tutta lasciolla all' or nell' altrui
 braccia,

Sparga l'bel volto, e le dogate chi-
 ome
 Un sudor via più freddo assai che
 ghiaccio,
 Indi s'udì 'l tuo nome
 Tra le labbra sonar fredde e tre-
 manti,
 E volti gli occhi al cielo
 Scolorito il bel viso, e i bei sembi-
 anti,
 Restò tanta bellezza immobil gelo.
Euridice, sc. 2. Bassidi O. Rinuccini,
Fir. 1622.

The Nymph of Melza dies in the
 manner of Eurydice, but not quite
 so gracefully. *Ninfa Tib. ff. 89.* It
 may be presumed, that from the
 moment this pastoral appeared, Fau-
 stina Mancina, who was shadowed
 under the character of the Nymph,
 lived in constant dread of a snake
 in the grass.

tion to seek her in the shades below. In the modern edition, *Mnefillus*, a satyr⁷, concludes the act with a monologue, in which he predicts that the Theban bard will never behold the light again, adding,

Nè meraviglia è se perde la luce
Costui che 'l cieco amor preso ha per duce.

Nor need we wonder he should lose the light,
Who takes, as guide, a god deprived of sight.

This satyr is totally omitted in the edition of 1513, to which we shall now return, and follow, uninterruptedly, to the end.

ACT. IV. Orpheus, at the conclusion of his elegiac verses on the death of Eurydice, suddenly appears before the gates of hell, employing all his vocal powers to appease Cerberus, and soften the rage of the furies that oppose his entrance. Pluto hears the song, and expresses astonishment at its wonderful effects.

Chi è costui che con sì dolce nota
Muove l'abyssò, et con l'ornata cetra?
Io vegho ferma de Ixion la ruota;
Sisipho affisso sopra la sua petra;
Et le Bellide star con l'urna vota;
Nè più l'acqua di Tantaló s'arrettra;

⁷ The copy of this drama, in which a satyr is introduced, was not discovered till 1776.

Et veggo Cerber con tre bocche intento,
Et le Furie acquietare il suo lamento *.

Who is he so sweetly finging
O'er the Stygian vale abhorr'd,
While her gloomy concave ringing
Vibrates to the tuneful chord?

Yonder spokes that fly for ever
With the restless sinner round,
At the soft, melodious, quaver
Stop, in holy magic bound.

On his rolling stone reposing
In the bosom of the vale,
Sisyphus, his labours closing,
Listens to the poet's tale.

From the lip, no more retreating,
Flits the phantom of a wave;
Nor the waters, ever fleeing,
Yon sad virgins try to save.

There, behold! in grim attention,
Sits the triple hound of hell:
Furies nigh, in mute suspension,
Cease the baleful dirge to swell.

*

* *Ovid. Metamp. lib. x. fab. 1. l.*
40—47. Politiano only departs from
Ovid in omitting,—"nec carpsere
jecur volucres."—Pope, in his *Ode*
for *Music*, not only omits this cir-
cumstance, but takes no notice of
the effect of Orpheus's music on
Cerberus, Tantalus, or the Belides:
neither has he availed himself of the
fine picture which both the Latin
and Italian poets present in Sisyphus
seated on his stone:

inique tuo sedisti, Sisyphæ, saxo.
Sisypho assiso sopra la sua petra.

In making "the pale spectres dance"
to the affecting music which melted
the hard heart of Pluto, and softened
"stern Proserpine," Pope seems to
have sacrificed common sense to the
convenience of a rhyme. But in his
description of the Furies, he excels
both Ovid and Politiano: indeed
the latter does not do justice to his
original.

Tum primum lachrymis victarum
carmine fama est
Eumenidum maduisse genas.

Minos⁹, with his usual rigour, advises Pluto not to admit the musical intruder. Orpheus, however, approaches the grim king, and, bending before his throne, sings the following supplicating verses :

O regnator de tutte quelle genti
 Che hanno perduta la superna luce ;
 Alqual discende ciò che gli elementi,
 Ciò che natura sotto il ciel produce ;
 Udite la cagion de' miei lamenti.
 Pietoso amor di nostri passi è duce—
 Non per Cerber leghar fo questa via,
 Ma solamente per la donna mia.
 Una serpe tra' fior nascosta e l'erba,
 Mi tolse la mia donna, anzi el mio core :
 Ond'io meno la vita in pena acerba,
 Nè posso più resistere al dolore.
 Ma se memoria alchuna in voi si serba
 Del vostro celebrato antico amore ;
 Se la vecchia rapina a mente havete,
 Euridice mia bella mi rendete.
 Ogni cosa nel fine a voi ritorna ;
 Ogni vita mortal quà giù richade :
 Quanto cerchia la luna con sue cerna,
 Convien che arrivi alle vostre contrade.
 Chi più, chi men tra superi soggiorna,
 Ognun convien che cerchi queste strade.
 Questo è de' nostri passi extremo segno ;
 Poi tenete di noi più longho regno.

⁹ Minos does not appear in the | the *Euridice* of Rinuccini, his place is
 modern edition of this drama. is | supplied by Rhadamanthus.

Così la *nympha mia* per voi si serba,
 Quando sua morte gli darà natura.
 Hor la tenera vita et l'ova acerba,
 Tagliata havete con la falce dura.
 Chi è che mieta la sementa in herba,
 Et non aspettì ch'ella sia matura?
 Dunque rendete a me la mia speranza:
 Io non ve'l chieggiò in don; questa è prestanza.

Io vene priego per le torbide acque
 Della palude Stygia, et de Acheronte;
 Pèl Chaos, onde tutto 'l mondo nacque,
 Et pel sonante ardor de Phlegetonte;
 Pèl pome che a te già, regina! piacque,
 Quando lasciasti pria nostro orizzonte,
 Et se pur me la niegha iniqua forte,
 Io non vo' su tornar; — ma chieggiò morte.

Great monarch of the heaven-abandon'd throng,
 To whom all mixtures of sublunar things,
 Wasted by dissolution, fleet along
 Thro' the dark void, on unsubstantial wings;—

Lift to the woful cause that hither led
 An hapless mortal from the vale of care;
 Not here in quest of Cerberus I sped,
 But to reclaim from hell my plighted fair.

A dire envenom'd snake, in flowers conceal'd,
 Gave the sad wound that sent her shade below;
 All sense of joy her deadly doom expell'd
 From this sad heart, the tenement of woe.

O king! I sink beneath the deadly stroke,
 Unless the mem'ry of your former flame
 Induce your royal mercy to revoke
 Her doom, and give me back the hapless dame.

O! if you call the lovely panting prize
 To mind, which erst from Enna's banks you bore;
 Return my consort to the upper skies,
 And let her husband mourn her loss no more.

All things to thee their final voyage steer;
 Here every spark of life extinguish'd lies;
 Whate'er is circled by the moony sphere,
 Here, on successive wing, spontaneous flies.

Hither alike the lofty and the low
 Sped ever downward to the shadowy strand;
 Hither the tide of souls in constant flow
 Descend, and pause to meet your last command.

We all are subjects of your silent reign,—
 She must be your's when Nature calls away;
 But now relentless fate has cut in twain
 Her vital thread before the final day.

His cruel hand the tender blade has mow'd,
 Ere summer suns matur'd the golden grain;
 Let her be to these arms again restor'd,—
 No present, but a loan, I wish to gain.

By Styx's turbid wave respect my call;
 By the dark flood of Acheron profound;
 By Chaos old, primæval fire of all;
 By Phlegethon, who runs his burning round;

By that lov'd fruit, O Queen! that pleas'd thy taste
 When thou forsook'st the light for shades below,
 Restore my spouse¹,—or, if her doom be past,
 For ever keep me in this world of woe.

¹ *Metamorp. lib. x. fab. 1. l. 28—39.* [biped the spirit of Ovid, far sur-
 Politiano, who seems to have im-] passes both Rinuccini and Pope in

Proserpine is moved, and intercedes for Orpheus. The grim king grants him his wife, on condition that he should not turn to look back on her while she follows him through the infernal regions². He flies, joyfully, to fetch away Eurydice, singing these well-known verses of Ovid,

Ite triumphales, &c.

But, impatient to behold his beloved wife once more, he breaks "*fell Pluto's terms*," and she is torn from his embraces by an invisible hand. As she fades from his sight, we hear her exclaim, in the affecting terms of the Eurydice of Virgil,

Oime che 'l troppo amore
Ci ha disfatti ambe dua!
Ecco ch'io ti son tolta a gran furore,
Nè sono hormai più tua.

the conclusion of this address. There is something extremely sublime in imploring Pluto by the Stygian wave, the flood of Acheron, and by "chaos old;" nor does the poet display less art in suddenly turning to Proserpine, and reminding her of the golden apple

which pleas'd her taste
When she forsook the light for shades
below.

How egregiously has Pope failed on this occasion! Could there be more ill-chosen topics to dwell upon in an address to a king reigning amidst

Dreadful gleams,
Dismal screams,
Fires that glow, &c.

than "fragrant winds,"—"amaranthine bowers,"—and the other delights of Elysium? *Ode for Music*. Pope indulged his fancy: Politiano exercised his judgment.

² Cipriani, in the beautiful engraving which embellishes Dr. Burney's curious and erudite history of Orpheus, introduces, with great felicity, a cupid, with a flaming torch, conducting the poet and his restored wife through the dreary regions of hell. *Hist. of Mus.* i. p. 326.

Ben tendo a te le braccia ; ma non vale,
Che indrieto son tirata :—Orfeo mio, *vale* !

Alas ! what fates our hapless love divide ;
What frenzy, Orpheus, tears thee from thy bride !
Again I sink ;—a voice resistless calls,
Lo ! on my swimming eyes cold slumber falls.
Now, now farewell ! invol'd in thickest night,
Borne far away, I vanish from thy sight,
And stretch tow'ards thee, all hope for ever o'er,
These unavailing arms, ah ! thine no more.

Orpheus laments his cruel fate. A fury interrupts him, observing, that his tears and lamentations are unavailing, for the decrees of fate are immutable.

Vane son tue parole ;
Vano è il pianto, el dolor. Tua legge è ferma.

ACT V. Orpheus renews his lamentations, intermingling them with severe reflections on the arts and inconstancy of the female sex, and concluding with a stanza, (omitted in the modern editions *) in

* Illa, quis et me, inquit miseram,
&c. *Georg. lib. iv. l. 494.* Politiano's close imitation of this passage will account for my adoption of Mr. Sotheby's excellent version.

Blackwell, in his *Enquiry into the life and writings of Homer*, p. 217, resolves the affecting tale of Orpheus and Eurydice into a moral lesson. While we admire the ingenuity of the writer, we regret the pleasing delusion. Who does not grieve when Prospero breaks his staff ?

* The passage alluded to, which begins thus,

Fanne di questo Giove intiera fede,
&c.

and which has, very properly, been omitted in the latter editions, probably first induced a belief in the story related by Jovius and Varillas, of the cause and manner of Politiano's death ; a story which Mr. Roscoe has clearly proved to be totally unfounded. *Vol. ii. p. 256—*

praise of a passion at which nature shudders, and of which I am willing to suppose the poet meant, like Ovid, to express his abhorrence, by making the declaration of such a sentiment the immediate cause of the violent death of Orpheus, who (conformably to poetic tradition) is torn in pieces by the priestesses of Bacchus⁵. The unfortunate bard being dragged off the stage by those enraged damsels, his head soon after appears in the scene, borne by an exulting Mænade, who is joined by the rest in a dithyrambic ode in praise of Bacchus, which they sing, dancing, with the frightful, but appropriate, accompaniment of frantic gestures⁶.

263. M. Landi, after Tiraboschi, has also made an ingenuous, and, in my opinion, a successful attempt, at clearing the memory of the injured bard from this foul imputation. *Tom.* iii. p. 399. But he has omitted to strengthen his vindication by observing, that Politiano only follows Ovid (*Metamp. lib. x. fab. i. l. 83—85*) in making Orpheus recommend the indulgence of an unnatural passion. No apology, however, can be offered for the audience that could patiently hear the eulogium of such an abominable practice!

⁵ In the drama of Rinuccini, Eurydice, by the interposition of Venus, is restored to the arms of Orpheus, and the piece ends happily. For this deviation from the received story, the author cites, in his justification, the example of the Greek poets in other fables; adding, that such a conclusion seemed best suited to the joyful occasion on which it was performed,—the mar-

riage of Maria de' Medici with Henry IV. of France.

⁶ We are taught by Dante the manner in which the choral dance was performed. The singer stood in the centre, and the dancers moved round with a measured step,

Come stelle vicine a firmi poli.

Parad. Cant. x. st. 26.

and, at the conclusion of every stanza, they paused, and sung the burden in chorus. See also *Life of Lorenzo de' Medici*, vol. i. p. 308, note (a). Dante's description of the choral dance will remind the learned reader of the *balet* performed before Ulysses in the court of Alcinoüs, when Demodocus advanced

Into the middle area, around whom
Stood blooming youths, all skilful in
the dance, &c.

Cæsar.

CORO DI MENADI¹.

Ciafeun segua, o Bacco, te,
Bacco, Bacco, oè, oè.

Di corimbi e di verd 'edere
Cinto il capo abbiàm così,
Per servirti a tuo richiedere
Festeggiando notte e dì.
Ognun beva : Bacco è quì :
E lasciate bere a me.

Ciafcun segua, &c.

Io ho vuoto già il mio corno ;
Porgi quel cantaro in qua :
Questo monte gira intorno,
O'l cervello a cerchio va :
Ognun corra in qua d in là,
Come vede far a me.

Ciafcun segua, &c.

Io mi moro già di sonno ;
Son io ebbra o sì o no ?
Più star dritti i pie non ponno ;
Voi siet 'ebbri, ch' io lo so :
Ognun faccia com 'io fo ;
Ognun succe come me.

Ciafcun segua, &c.

Ognun gridi Bacco, Bacco !
E pur cacci del vin giù.
Poi col sonno farem fiacco ;
Bevi tu, e tu, e tu.

¹ This chorus, which, in the modern editions, is intitled *Coro di Menadi*, is called in the edition of 1513, *Sacrificio delle Baccante in honore di Bacco*. I have followed the former as being the most correct : the variations, however, are slight and unimportant.

Io non posso ballar più.

Ognun gridi oè, oè.

Ciafcun segua, o Bacco, te,

Bacco, Bacco, oè, oè.

CHORUS OF MÆNADES.

Every Mœnad follow thee,

Bacchus, Bacchus, hear, Evoè!

Clust'ring berries, ivy green,

Circling thus our heads are seen.

Bacchus, we thy call obey,

Sporting, feasting, night and day.

Here is Bacchus!—drink around :

Pledge me all with ivy crown'd.

Every Mœnad, &c.

Ha!—the jovial horn is dry,—

From that tankard a supply.—

Round and round yon mountain wheels,

And my brain in circle reels.

Hurry, hurry o'er the mead,

Follow, follow as I lead.

Every Mœnad, &c.

But with sleep I die away.—

Am I tipsy, Mœnads, say?

Feet the traitors play with me;

You are tipsy all I see.—

Sip and tippie, Mœnads all,

Then, like me, in slumber fall.

Every Mœnad, &c.]

Shout to Bacchus, shout on high !
 Drink,—drink deep, with shouting dry,—
 Sink, dissolv'd in slumber's dew,—
 But first pledge me, you and you.
 Dizzy,—I can dance no more,
 Evòè ! all ye Mænads roar.

Every Mænad follow thee,
 Bacchus, Bacchus, hear, Evòè !

WHEN we reflect on the circumstances under which this drama was written, and the short space of time employed in the composition, we must consider the mind which produced such an effusion as peculiarly gifted by heaven. It was written, says the author, at the requisition of the cardinal of Mantua, in the course of two days, amidst the continual tumult of a gay court². Yet this hasty production not only gave birth to PASTORAL COMEDY and the MELO-DRAMA, but

² In a letter to Carlo Canale, accompanying a copy of this drama, the author says, "Così desideravo ancora io che la Fabula di Orfeo, la quale a requisizione del nostro reverendissimo Cardinale Mantuano, in tempo di duo giorni, intra continui tumulti, in stilo vulgare, perchè dagli spettatori fusse meglio intesa, avevo composta," &c. The cardinal here alluded to, was Francesco Gon-

zaga, son. of Lodovico, marquis of Mantua, and of Barbara of Brandenburg.

The year in which this drama was exhibited, is still matter of doubt and dispute amongst the literary antiquaries of Italy. Yet there appears to me little difficulty in ascertaining the fact. It is generally allowed that the *Orfeo* was the production of Politiano, in the eight-

afforded the first specimen of the DITHYRAMBIC ODE in the Italian language², and, as we have already observed, seems to have been the earliest successful attempt at reviving the SATYRA of the Greeks¹. - As its title to the proud boast of having given the primal idea of the pastoral drama is universally acknowledged, and as the other honours which we have claimed for it cannot be justly denied, we shall close our account of this piece with the proofs which Dr. Burney adduces in support of his assertion, that "it was certainly the first attempt at the musical drama, which was afterwards perfected by Metastasio." Part of the first scene, Att. 1. he observes, seems to have been declaimed, though it is in verse,—in terza rima; but as the rest is called "Canto di Aristo," he naturally concludes it was sung. He

centh year of his age. In 1454 he was born. Of course the *Orfeo* must have been written in 1472. And in that year we find that the cardinal, at whose requisition it was composed, made an excursion from Bologna, where he was legate, to pay a visit to his family and friends in his native city of Mantua.

¹ M. Landi, speaking of the *Orfeo*, observes, "Le chœur des Bacchantes est le première pièce qu'on ait vû après la renaissance des lettres, dans le genre dithyrambique." *Hist. de la Litt. de l'Ital.* tom. iii. p. 244. The same observation is made by an anonymous translator of the *Cyclops* of Euripides. *Pad.* 1749. *Avv.* p. 15.

² The anonymous writer, whom we have mentioned in the preceding note, again notices the *Orfeo*, and says, he discovers in it "una imperfetta, ma viva immagine appunto della Satirica Greca. Verò è," he continues, "che Satiri in esso non si veggono. Ma essendoci poi il coro delle Bacchanti, ed essendo tutto il rimanente della Favola lavorato in su quel modo, breve, con vario genere di versi mescolati di canto, e di ballo, &c." p. 16. If this learned writer lived to see the corrected edition of 1776, in which a satyr is introduced, he must have been further confirmed in his opinion.

seems also to think that the entire of the third act was likewise sung. And he concludes with observing, that "the whole of this drama, which, from its brevity, seems chiefly to have been sung, is admirably calculated for impassioned music of every kind²."

To these judicious observations I am sorry I cannot add the name of the composer. But no documents that I have had an opportunity of consulting, throw a single ray of light upon this obscure point. It has been suggested to me, that Politiano's friend, Arrigo Tedesco, was probably the composer who set the "*Orfeo*." But the haste in which it was gotten up, and the distance of Mantua from Florence, where Arrigo resided, precluded the possibility of his talents being employed on this occasion. Where there are no authorities, we must have recourse to conjecture. May it not be presumed, then, that the precipitate manner in which the piece was prepared for representation, made it necessary to adapt borrowed or popular airs to the songs? The connecting music was probably supplied by the

² *Hist. of Music*, vol. iv. p. 14. Perhaps the *Orfeo* is not the only obligation which Music and Poetry have to Politiano. I am inclined to think he was the first of the Italian poets who raised Echo; at least I do not recollect to have met with an earlier instance of responsive poetry in

the Italian language than the stanza subjoined to the edition of the *Orfeo* printed at Florence in 1513. It begins thus;

Che fai tu, Ecco, mentre ch' io ti
chiamo? *Ans.*

maestro di capella to the duke, or by some of the dilettanti, who, like Striggio³, were often employed on great festivals in the several courts of Italy. Not a vestige of the music of this drama remains⁴; nor did any secular music of the time of Politiano meet the ardent and judiciously-directed researches of the learned and elegant historian of music.

As Mr. Roscoe has detailed, with his usual elegance and perspicuity, all the most interesting circumstances in the life of Politiano⁵, I shall

³ When *La Cofanaria* of F. Ambra was recited in Florence, on occasion of the marriage of Don Francesco de' Medici and Queen Giovanna of Austria, "messer Aless. Striggio fece le musiche del primo, del secondo, et del quinto, Intermedio." *La Cofan. Fir.* 1593. Dr. Burney informs me, that several of Striggio's madrigals were printed in England in the time of Queen Elizabeth, when our poets and musicians were universal admirers and imitators of the Italians. From these the musical reader may form some idea of the dramatic music of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in Italy. Vid. *Hawkins' Hist. of Mus.* vol. ii. p. 331.

⁴ It is a curious circumstance in musical history, that in the same court, and perhaps upon the identical stage where the piece that gave birth to the Italian opera was first represented, a decided opera, on the same subject, which is supposed to have been the first ever printed with music, was represented about one hundred and thirty years after. I allude to the *Orfeo* of Claudio Monteverde. Sir J. Hawkins, who gives an interesting account of this piece, says,

"it is to be observed, that, in the performance of it, no accompaniment of a whole orchestra was required; but the airs performed by the several singers were sustained by instruments of various kinds, assigned to each character respectively in the dramatis personæ." iii. p. 430. The office of protatic personage, which, in the *Orfeo* of Politiano, is filled by Mercury, is, in this opera, usurped by *la Musica*, or the Genius of Music, who enjoins silence, not only on the audience, but on the birds, and even things inanimate.

⁵ *Life of Lorenzo de' Med. passim.* An energetic writer, and sound critic, speaking of Mr. Roscoe's account of Politiano, very justly observes, "It were an injury to abridge it." *Purf. of Lit. Dial.* iii. A very elegant and interesting memoir has been lately devoted to this finished and polite scholar and poet by the Rev. W. P. Grefwell. The Italian biographer of Politiano who affords most satisfaction, is the Abate Seraffi. His mention of the *Orfeo* is, however, too slight to gratify a lover of the drama.

wave any biographical notices of this extraordinary man : but I shall beg leave to indulge in the pleasure of transcribing his literary character, as drawn by the glowing pencil of M. Tenhove. " The Italian muses, that had been in a deep sleep or lethargy for near a century, were roused from their disgraceful slumbers at his soft and powerful voice. His stanzas, " Della famosa Giostira," resemble Virgil for the brilliancy of expression ; and in his vintage Dithyrambics, the harmony of numbers, and force of wine, are happily united. Those kinds of drama, which were called " Favole Boscareccie," or pastoral fables, were supposed to have been invented by him ; and his " Orfeo" is a production of this species, on which Tasso and Guarini have improved.— The stanza of eight rhymes he adopted, after the example of the " Theseide" of Boccaccio ; but where Boccaccio only made an effort, Politiano succeeded. Too great a conviction of the superiority of his own talents rendered him petulant, captious, and unpleasant, to his learned friends. The weakness and foibles from which men of the brightest talents are not entirely free, reduce them to the standard of their contemporaries ; and the balance of human advantages is, by these means, preserved. Politiano was lavish in his commendation of ancient Greece ; from the

moderns he withheld even justice*. He was born in 1454, and died in 1494.

An attempt having been made to wrest from Politiano the palm due to the inventor of pastoral comedy, I hope I shall be pardoned if I should avail myself of this opportunity of restoring it to his brow. "In the year 1539," says Mr. Roscoe, "Tanfillo accompanied his great benefactor, Don Garzia di Toledo, then general of the Neapolitan galleys, to Sicily, where, in the month of December in the same year, that nobleman gave a splendid reception to Donna Antonia Cardona, daughter of the marquis of Collesano, to whom he then paid his addresses. On this occasion Tanfillo wrote a pastoral comedy, which was performed with the greatest degree of splendour and expence. The stage made use of for

* *Mem. of the House of Medici*, vol. i. p. 334. Luigi Pulci, in his *Morgante Maggiore*, takes occasion to acknowledge his obligations to Politiano, and to compliment his talents.

E ringrazio il mio car non Angiolino,
Senza il qual molto laboravo invano,
Piuttosto un Cherubino o Serafino,
Onore e gloria di Montepulciano,
Che me dette d'Arnaldo e d'Alcuino
Notizia, e lume del mio Carlo mano;
Ch' io ero entrato in uno oscuro bosco,
Or la strada c' l' sentier del ver conosco.

Cant. xxxv. ff. 169.

See also *cant. xxviii. ff. 145*. This extraordinary poem has been ascribed to Politiano; but, I think, with very little appearance of truth. Neither the course of his studies, nor the turn of his mind, seemed to lead to the ludicrous, which is certainly the characteristic of the *Morgante Maggiore*. That he, and Marfilio Ficino, (who were frequent guests at the table of Lorenzo de' Medici, where this poem was recited, canto by canto, as it was composed) might have suggested hints, is very probable; nor is it unlikely that Lorenzo himself assisted the author in the same way. But whatever praise is due to the structure and composition of the poem, Luigi Pulci has, I believe, a just right to claim.

this purpose, was raised upon the water, and consisted of three large galleys, which were placed at regular distances, so as nearly to adjoin the gardens of the palace, and over which a platform was laid, extending to the shore; the whole was then covered with canvas, and lined with exquisite tapestry, representing, like the palace of Dido, the most remarkable circumstances of the Trojan war. From the description given of the representation of this piece, Fontanini conjectures, that Tansillo is intitled to the honour of being the first Italian who set the example of the pastoral comedy, which was afterwards brought to perfection by Tasso and Guarini; but, in this, as in many other particulars respecting Italian literature, he is mistaken; for it is certain, that the first idea of this elegant species of comedy was given by Politiano, in the preceding century, in his dramatic fable, intitled “ Orfeo ?.”

’ Pref. to *The Nurse*, *Liverp.* 1798. A late noble friend, whose acquaintance with Italian literature was deep and extensive, thus replied to a letter on the subject of Politiano’s drama: “ The particulars you send me respecting the *Orfeo* are curious; yet still I am of opinion that, though Tasso may not have invented that species of poem, he may certainly be accounted the inventor of its perfection. Indeed

the absolute invention can scarcely be ascribed to any modern, since every eclogue was a palpable hint towards it.” Mr. Rolcoe seems of this opinion. *Vol. i. p. 302.* See also *Della poet. rapp. p. 2. Quadrio, t. v. p. 396.* Metastasio accounts very ingeniously for the pleasure which pastoral poetry affords, in a letter to his friend the Abate Pasqualini. Vid. his *Mem.* by Dr. Burney, *vol. i. p. 217.*

VI. **A**BOUT this time, another innovation took place in the Italian drama. Disgusted with the farcical representations which, under the assumed title of Comedies, had long disgraced the stage of Italy, Bernardo Divizio, afterwards cardinal da Bibbiena, resolved to present his countrymen with a specimen of what a very ingenious writer^{*} esteems the most interesting and instructive species of comedy,—the real characteristic,—in their maternal tongue; and in order to render his picture of life the more faithful in its resemblance to the original, he rejected metre, and adopted prose in his “Calandra,” the comedy to which we allude[†]. This admirable production, which, according to Riccoboni, was written about the year 1490, deserves, in the opinion of that ingenious writer, not only to be the model for all future comic writers, but the standard by which the effusions of the Comic Muse should be uniformly

^{*} Miss Baillie. See the *Introd. Disc.* to *A series of plays on the Passions*, in which the stronger passions of the mind are depicted with a pencil equally masterly and energetic. If it should be thought that the *Calandra* does not exactly answer to this lady's definition of characteristic comedy, I am sure it will not be denied that it belongs to that class. To the same class appertains the *Mandragola*, and other early Italian comedies. And *La Pesiara* of Luca Contile, (*Milan*, 1550) which the author declares in the prologue should properly be

called *L'Amicizia*; because, says he, “l'amicizia è la più nobil materia che si contenga in questa compositione,” may be said to fall within the plan of this lady's admirable work.

[†] “Abdicavit in ea numeros primus, ut vernaculos sales dulcius,” says Jovius, “atque liquidius seminarium auribus infunderet: quo multi risus hilarior voluptas excitaretur.” The motive assigned by Jovius for Divizio's preference of prose, is a striking proof of his never-ceasing anxiousness to please the fair.

tried. In his day it was unrivalled; nor has it since been often surpassed. The construction of the fable is excellent; the language pure and appropriate; the characters highly finished and admirably supported; all the incidents rendered conducive to the promotion of the main action; and the *dénoûment* happily produced. Fessino is as witty as the Jeremy of Congreve, and as fertile in expedient as the Davus of Terence. Fulvia, artful and libidinous, is the dupe of her own criminal passion. Samia, like the chamber-maid of many succeeding comic writers, is ever ready to forward the amorous designs of her mistresses. Rufo, a negromante, or conjuror, must have been thought a natural character in an age when faith was given to judicial astrology¹. And in Calandro that kind of mental imbecility which the Italians distinguish by the term *sciocchezza*, or silliness, may be said to be personified. In the prologue, we are told the comedy is called "Calandra," from "Calandro, who is so silly that it will hardly be believed that Nature ever

¹ Such was the prevalence of this supposed science in Italy in the fifteenth century, that Pico Mirandula thought it necessary to employ his eloquence, and Lorenzo de' Medici his muse, against its follies. *Mem. of the H. of Med.* vol. i. p. 331. These great men found an able coadjutor in Ariosto, whose admirable comedy of *Il Negromante* paints in strong colours, and exhibits in its true light, that charlatan in science,—a

judicial astrologer. Who would not smile at such a character being supposed to be the prototype of the Prospero of Shakespeare? But Bishop Warburton, who hazards this conjecture, could not have read the comedy. Nor is it yet known to the mere English reader. To the French reader it was rendered familiar so early as 1562, by the translation of Jean de la Taille.

created a man so weak ²." In some scenes we are charmed with humour; in others we are dazzled with wit; and in all we discover a view of life portrayed by the hand of a master. But though this comedy was written by a cardinal, and honoured with the countenance and approbation of a pope, it is not calculated to serve the cause either of religion or of morality. The author sports with Death, and too often solicits the aid of the Deity to promote an amorous intrigue. In the scene between Lidio and his governor Polinico, an adulterous connection is defended with too much ingenuity. The governor argues feebly, while Lidio, with the witty aid of Fessino, almost convinces us he is in the right; so that we do not wonder, and hardly regret, that Polinico's endeavours to estrange his affections from Fulvia are as vain as "an attempt to embrace a shade, or catch the wind with nets,"—*abbracciar l'ombra, e pigliare il vento colle reti.*—Perhaps, too, in the economy of the fable, some faults might

² "Calandra detta è da Calandro, il quale voi troverete sì sciocco, che forse difficil vi sia a credere, che natura uomo sì sciocco creasse giammai." *Prolog.* In exhibiting in the *Calandra*, not the picture of a silly man, but that of silliness itself, Divizio has adhered to the true spirit of comedy, according to Bishop Hurd's idea of that species of drama. *Hor. vol. i. p. 235.* In Calandro may be recognised the Tofano of Boccaccio, *Gior. vii. nov. 4.*, a character known on the stage of France, as

George Dandin, and on the English stage, as Barnaby Rattle. The incident in Boccaccio's novel, in which the heroine pretends to throw herself, in despair, into a pond, is omitted by Divizio; but it has been made an happy use of, though not exactly followed, both by the French and English dramatists. Of the origin of this tale in the East, and its progress through various countries, a curious account is given by M. Le Grand. *Fab. ou Cont. du xii^e. et du xiii^e. sc. t. iii. p. 151, 152.*

be discovered, particularly in Att. v. ; and in the opening of Att. iii. where Fessino, in the manner of the Old Comedy, addresses the audience,—*Ecco, o spettatori*, &c. But instead of seeking for something to censure in this piece, we should rather express our surprise that one of the first comedies that was written at the revival of the drama, and that too the production of a gay voluptuous priest and subtle courtier, should have approached so near perfection.

Aware of the difficulty, I may say, impossibility, of transfusing the genuine spirit of comic humour into the most elaborate translation, I shall not attempt to give the English reader an idea of the scene in which Fessino undertakes to teach Calandro how he may die, and return again to life; but I shall beg leave to recommend it to the perusal of the Italian reader, as a *chef d'œuvre*. Much as we must admire the author's comic powers in this scene, we cannot, however, but think he speaks too lightly of death, when he says, " it is a fable,"—*il morire è una favola*,—and adds, that the only difference between the living and the dead is, that one moves, and the other is incapable of voluntary motion.

Fess. Tu sai, Calandro, che altra differenza non è tra il vivo, e il morto, se non in quanto che il morto non si muove mai, ed il vivo sì : e però, quando tu faccia come io ti dirò, sempre resusciterai.

But we cannot refrain from smiling, when he thus replies to Calandro's ridiculous question, "by what means is life to be restored?"—"That, Sir, is one of the most profound secrets in the world, and hardly known to any one."

CALAND. Intendo: ma il fatto sta come si fa poi a rivivere.

FESS. Questo è bene uno de' più profondi segreti ch'abbia tutto il mondo, e quasi nessuna il fa.

Apprehensive of being suspected of pilfering from Plautus, Divizio takes much pains, in the prologue, to convince the reader, that he has no obligations to the Latin poet. "Plautus," says the protatic personage, "deserves to be robbed, because he, like a blockhead, exposes all his treasures to the world, without the security of lock and key. But the author takes heaven to witness, that he has not availed himself of this carelessness." In order to be convinced of the truth of this assertion, he humorously desires his readers to examine the works of Plautus, and he is confident they will find that the Roman poet has lost nothing³.

³ "De' quali se sia chi dica lo autore essere grand ladro di Plauto, lasciamo stare, che a Plauto molto bene staria l'essere rubato, per tenere il moccicone le cose sue senza una chiave, e senza una custodia al mondo. Ma lo autore giura al ciel che non gli ha furato questo (facendo un scoppio colle dita) e vuole stare a paragone. E che ciò sia vero, dice

che si cerchi quanto ha Plauto, et troverassi che niente gli manca di quello che aver suole." *Prol.* Had Divizio been addicted to plagiarism, Plautus might have been in danger; but the delicacy of Terence would have protected him. This may be inferred from his opinion of the latter poet, as stated by Jovius.

Though I have, with Riccoboni, referred the composition of this drama to the year 1490 ⁴, I am inclined to think it was not long written before it was represented, in 1508, at the court of Urbino ⁵. For if Divizio died in the year 1520, at the age of fifty, he could only have reached his twentieth year when Riccoboni conjectures he wrote this comedy; and the "*Calandra*" certainly displays a more minute and extensive acquaintance with life, than a youth of nineteen or twenty could be supposed to have acquired. Besides, when it was represented at Urbino, Castiglione supplied the prologue, because, he says, in a letter to a friend, the author had not finished, or had not time to prepare, one. Hence we may infer that the comedy was then a recent production ⁶,—perhaps written to amuse

⁴ Tom. i. p. 142.

⁵ Baretti erroneously asserts that the *Calandra* was first exhibited at Florence. *Acc. of Italy*, vol. i. p. 170.

⁶ The earliest edition of this comedy that Apostolo Zeno was able to discover, was printed at Sienna in 1521. *Comedia elegantissima in prosa nuovamente composta per messer Bernardo da Bibbiena, intitulata Calandra. Senis ex officina nostra* XIII. Cal. Martias MDXXI. The earliest edition that has met my observation, is that of *Ven. per N. d' Aristotle*, 1530. In 1775, it was reprinted by Zatta, in the *Parn. Ital.* tom. xvii.

Sig. Polidori is of opinion, that the *Calandra* must yield precedence, in point of time, to the *Cassaria* of Ariosto; but the publication of both was certainly posterior to that of the

Catania, already noticed. This gentleman's arguments, which are equally ingenious and convincing, I shall beg leave to transcribe. "Passerò molte cose che potrei dire sulle pretenzioni di diversi pel primato nella *Commedia* in prosa, ma io certo credo che l'Ariosto abbia preceduto ogni altro. 'E noto il curiosissimo aneddoto di questo gran poeta, il quale sgridato di suo padre per qualche errore, egli, quantunque potesse defenderli pur nol fece; e disse poi che non aveva risposto per meglio poter prestare attenzione alle sue parole, poichè nella sua *Cassaria* aveva una scena simile, e gli bisognava un esempio di paterna ammonizione da potere imitare. Il padre di Lodovico morì nel 1500, onde è evidente che la *Cassaria* fosse scritta

the elegant society which we find assembled at that court in the "Cortegiano".—The second representation of this comedy took place in the Vatican, in the presence of Leo X. for the gratification of the marchioness of Mantua, on which occasion the characters were sustained by youths selected from the families of the principal Roman nobility, and the scenery and all the decorations of the stage devised and executed by Baldazar Peruzzi. This painter, according to Vasari, led the way to the perfection of scenic decoration and illusion on the modern stage, surpassing, by an happy application of the rules of perspective, all the attempts of the ancients in illusory painting. His biographer, while he dwells with delight on the delusive views exhibited at the representation of the "Calandra," and the wonderful arrangement of the lights in aid of the de-

prigna del cominciamento del secolo xvi. *Lett. al Autore*. In a letter to Mazzuchelli, subjoined to his *Vita di P. Aratino*, Pad. 1741, it is asserted, that the *Cassaria* and *Suppositi* were written "intorno al 1493, o al 1494."

Admitting that Sig. Polidori has established his hypothesis, Ariosto may not only claim the honour of having written the first original Italian comedy in prose, (for the *Catania* was only a translation) but of having given birth to the first prose comedy in the English language, and of laying the foundation of one of Shakespeare's favourite dramas. Mr. Hawkins, in the preface to the *Suppositi* of G. Gascoigne, 1566, (a transla-

tion of *I Suppositi* of Ariosto) says, "Though this comedy be a translation from the Italian, and not of English growth, yet it comes recommended to us, not only on account of its antiquity, being the first play written in prose in our language, but as having laid the foundation of Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew*." *Orig. of the Eng. Dram.* vol. iii.

The anecdote, which is slightly alluded to by Sig. Polidori, and related at length by Mr. Warton, *Obs. on the Fairy Queen*, vol. i. p. 225. would seem to be the origin of a scene of true comic humour in the *Dramatist* of Mr. Reynolds.

⁷ *Lib. i.*

ception, expresses surprise at the number of streets, temples, houses, and palaces, which the painter contrived to crowd, without confusion, into so small a compass⁸. This comedy was again exhibited (1520) in Mantua⁹, before Isabella d'Este, who knew to

heighten talents by protection's beam¹.

And a fourth representation, under the direction of Nannoccio, a celebrated scene-painter, took place at Lyons (1548) in the presence of Henry III. and Catherine de' Medici, on which occasion eight hundred pistoles were distributed amongst the performers;—and this, says Sig. Signorelli, triumphantly, happened a century before the French were acquainted with Castro, Lopez de Vega, or Calderon! Apostolo Zero attributes to the pleasure which the representation of the “Calandra” afforded the suite of Henry and Catherine, the origin of a passion for Italian comedy in France, and the consequent establishment, in

⁸ *Tom. iii. p. 398.*

⁹ According to Equicola, the historian of Mantua, this representation took place on “la notte che precedette alli 21. di febbrajo del 1520.” About this time, or perhaps earlier, this comedy was “recitata nella famosa e generosa città di Venezia.” This we learn from the title-page of an edition printed at Ven. 1522.

¹ *Mr. Hayley. An elegant tri-*

bute of praise is offered to this accomplished lady by Trifino, in his *Ritratti*, from which it appears that the graces of her mind were only surpassed by those of her person. Three letters from her to Trifino are preserved in his *Opere*, *Ver. 1729*, one of which, that turns upon the education of her son, does her infinite honour. How delightful it is to meet with and dwell on such a character!

1577, of the company of Italian comedians, denominated "I Gelosi," in Paris².

Bernardo Divizio was born of obscure parents, on the 4th of August, 1470, in the castle of Bibbiena, a pleasant village, situated on the Arno, at the foot of the Alps, in the district of Casentino. Out of respect to the place of his birth, he assumed its name; and out of respect to his talents, it is celebrated by Berni³, and was visited, with veneration, by Bembo⁴. While still a youth, he was invited to Florence by his brother, Pietro, and introduced by him into the Medici family. Attaching himself to Giovanni, afterwards Leo X. a friendship was formed between him and that great man, which strengthened as they advanced in life. They cultivated together the study of the belles lettres, and courted the acquaintance of the literati with

² *Elog. Ital. tom. i. p. 361.* This company made their début on the 19th of May, 1577, in the great hall of the palais Bourbon. Before the establishment of the *Gelosi* in France, Margaret de Valois, queen of Navarre, invited a company of Italian comedians to her court, to perform Italian dramas of her own composition. *Ibid. See also Recherch. sur le Theat. de France, i. p. 344.* All the companies of Italian players had formerly, like the one in question, a particular denomination. Montaigne praises the *Desfosi*, whom he saw (1581) perform at Pisa, *tom. iii. p. 39.* And the *Gelosi* are honourably noticed in the *Ragg. di Parn. cent. i. ragg. 78*, where particular praise is

bestowed on Cola Francesco Vacantiello, one of the company.

M. de Beauchamps gives a curious and interesting account of the decline and fall of the Italian stage in France, and subjoins the affecting address of Tomaso Visentini (in the character of Arlecchino) to the audience, on the substitution of French for Italian comedies in the theatre of the hôtel de Bourgogne. *Tom. iii. p. 274—278.*

³ Bibbiena
Ch' un terra è sopr' Arno, molto amena.

Orl. inn. nov. compost. da F. Berni, lib. iii. cant. 7.

⁴ *Leti. Ven. 1560, Part. i. p. 5.*

which Florence then abounded. Adhering to Leo in his adversity, he was the faithful companion of his exile, attending him in his wanderings through France, Germany, and Flanders. During his residence in Rome, he rendered himself useful to Julius II. who took him into his service, and conferred upon him some important offices. In this situation, he secretly paved the way for his friend and patron Giovanni to the papal chair; and when a vacancy occurred, he artfully contrived to impress on the minds of the cardinals who composed the conclave, an idea that the health of his friend was extremely precarious; and they were, in consequence, induced to elect him pope. Amidst all these important and multifarious occupations, Bibbiena found time to dedicate to the muses. It is supposed, it was about this period, to borrow the words of M. Tenhove, "he awoke the Tuscan Thalia out of her sleep or stupor," producing the comedy we have noticed, in which, as the same lively writer observes, "great intrigue, and a true comic vein of humour, are happily united, though, on the score of morality, it is liable to some objections⁵." But the muses were not the only ladies to whom Bibbiena was devoted: it is said by his biographers, that amongst the fair dames of Rome, there were many who shared his attentions,—in-

⁵ *Mem. of the House of Medici*, vol. ii. p. 72.

deed we might say, that, like Anacreon⁶, his heart, unfettered by any one object, was warm with devotion to the sex in general, to whom the charms of his conversation must have powerfully recommended him⁷. Still sensible to an early attachment at Urbino, we find him wasting a melting sigh from Rome, through the medium of his friend Bembo, to the soft-consenting Faustina, a lady of that court. Bembo, while he executes, with fidelity, this tender commission, takes occasion to upbraid his friend with allowing too much of his time and his thoughts to be occupied by amorous pursuits⁸.

On the exaltation of Leo to the chair of St. Peter, the services of Bibbiena were not forgotten. He was immediately appointed treasurer

⁶ I borrow the words of his admirable translator, Mr. Moore. Had Bibbiena been acquainted with the writings of Anacreon, he would probably, like Cowley, have left us a chronicle of his mistresses. But the precious remains of the Teian bard had not been rescued from oblivion when Bibbiena flourished. This happy discovery was not made, or, at least, disclosed, till 1554, thirty-four years after the death of Bibbiena. *Vid.* the learned and elegant preface to *Odes of Anacreon, translated by Thomas Moore, Lond. 1802, p. 30.* I may, perhaps, be reminded, that it is asserted by Varillas, that some fragments of Anacreon were found in the Laurentian library, by Polittano, who died in 1494. But the authority of Mr. Moore has more weight with me, than that of the French historian, who seems, on this

occasion, rather to hazard a conjecture, than relate a fact.

⁷ The charms of his conversation are celebrated by all his biographers, and noticed by several contemporary writers: his pleasantry is particularly extolled by Jovius, who was himself, according to Giraldis, "di vivace ingegno, e, sopra tutto, ben parlante." *Hecat. second part, p. 206.*

⁸ "A Faustina ho fatto la vostra ambasciata; vi ringratia dell' amore che le mostrate. Per lei non mancherà, che l'opera non vada innanzi, se per altri non mancherà, dico per chi sapete che è ritroso. Increfemi che amore v'assassini più che mai, poi che non potete per hora trovare altro scampo alle insidie sue, che quello delle lettere." This letter is dated from Urbino, 1st September, 1508.

to the holy see. And on the 23d of September, 1513, he was created a cardinal, in direct opposition to the advice of the other members of the sacred college, who thought, says Jovius, that the author of the "*Calandra*" would disgrace the purple.⁹ Two years after he was invested with this new dignity, he was sent by Leo to preside at the erection, by Sansovino, of the elegant marble edifice, designed by Bramante, which encompasses the Santa Casa at Loreto. The wealth and rank which Bibbiena now enjoyed, enabled him to become the munificent patron of men of talents. Amongst the celebrated literary characters whom he took into his service, are enumerated Camillo Paleotti, Giam-

⁹ It is probable, that when Bibbiena undertook the *Calandra*, he flattered himself it would rather serve to promote than obstruct his advancement in life. Harvey, in order to stimulate his friend Spenser to employ his talents in dramatic composition, observes, "you know it hath bin the usual practise of the most exquisite and odd wits, in all nations, and specially in Italy, rather to show and advance themselves that way than any other, as namely those three notorious discourfing heads, Bibbiena, Machiaval, and Aretine, did, to let Bembo and Ariosto pass with the great admiration of the whole country; being indeed matchable in all points, both for conceipt of wit and eloquent decyphering, with Aristophanes and Menander in Greek, or with Plautus and Terence in Latine, or with any other in any other tongue." *Works of Ed. Spenser, fol. Lond. 1679.*

When my learned friend, Mr. Todd, shall indulge the public with his promised edition of Spenser's Works, it will appear that the dramatic poetry of Italy was fondly studied by Harvey. Indeed at this period every species of Italian poetry had numerous admirers and imitators in England; and it will yet, perhaps, be admitted, that Italian literature had more influence on the literature of England in "the golden days" of good queen Bess, than seems at present to be imagined. Peacham contemptuously calls the Italian dramas of this period, *farces*. Yet it is acknowledged by Sir P. Sidney, that the violation of the Unities, which so frequently occurs in *Gorboduc*, then the pride of the English stage, would not be endured in those farces. Till Shakespeare arose, the pieces alluded to by Harvey were unrivalled on the stage of England.

batista Sanga, and Giulio Sadoletto'; and amongst the artists employed by him in the public works which he conducted, Raffaello was highly distinguished;—indeed it is supposed he had it in contemplation to give his niece in marriage to that great painter². Leo having resolved on adding the duchy of Urbino to the papal territories, gave the command of his army to Bibbiena, who succeeded in wresting it from a family to which, I am sorry to add, he had many obligations, and in the polished society of whose court he had passed many delicious hours! The relation of facts so degrading to human nature, is a painful task, but an imperious duty of history. In 1518, he was sent to France in a diplomatic capacity, in order to dispose the French court to unite with the other christian powers against the Turks. His deep policy, the brilliancy of his wit, and his admirable colloquial powers, gaining on the affections of Francis I. it is supposed that monarch insinuated a promise to support his pretensions to the papal chair, in case

¹ Sadoletto was not more fortunate in experiencing the patronage of Bibbiena, than in enjoying the friendship of Bembo. He was created a cardinal by Paul III. He is known as a poet by his *Curtius*, which probably recommended him to the notice of Bibbiena, who is enumerated by Sir P. Sidney amongst

the patrons of poetry, in his able defence of that divine art.

² *Vafari*, tom. iii. p. 225. *Fir.* 1771. From a letter which Raffaello addressed to his uncle on this occasion, he seems to have hesitated; a circumstance which (whatever his motive might have been) must have wounded the pride of the lady.

he should survive his patron Leo³. But however secretly this promise was made, it reached the knowledge of Leo; and Bibbiena found himself not only ruined in the esteem of his patron, but suspected designs against his life,—designs at which Jovius smiles⁴. Bibbiena, who had probably as much sensibility as genius, was so deeply affected at the loss of Leo's favour, that he is supposed to have died (1520) of grief and disappointment, the year after his return from France. His remains were deposited in the cathedral of St. Peter, with an inscription, expressive of his obligations to Leo. It was his wish, however, that his body should be interred at Loreto, a place for which he seems to have formed a strong attachment. He remembered it in his will; and the great bell of the church, which still bears his name, was an early earnest of his regard.

³ Jovius, an old courtier, uses the language of experience, when he says, (I borrow the words of his Italian translator) “e quello che soua ogn' altra cosa imperta nelle corti, pieno d' una certa argutia giocunda, e sottile, con laquale ci

(Bibbiena) sapea persuadere altrui ciò, che gli piaceva.”

⁴ “Inani certè argomento,” says he, speaking of the cardinal's suspicions on perceiving the approach of death.

VII. **AGOSTINO RICCHI** of Lucca, partly dissenting from the opinion of Bernardo Divizio da Bibbiena, esteemed the use of rhyme in comedy as contrary to nature and to truth ; but considered measured prose, or familiar blank verse, as essential to the perfection of that species of drama. Impressed with this idea,—an idea sanctioned by the practice of the ancient comic poets,—he wrote a comedy, intitled, “ I Tre Tiranni⁵, ” in heroic measure, reduced from the lofty swell of tragedy to the level of familiar conversation,—a measure which

(nisi quod pede certo

Differt sermoni, sermo merus)⁶.

— batè the numbers, is but mere discourse.

FRANCIS.

⁵ Aless. Vellutello, in a very sensible preface to this comedy, observes, “ Ha schifatto la rima, perche essendo la comedia certa appresentatione delle cose vere, non richiede, in alcun modo quel suono de le rime, perche nel parlar naturale simile accadentia non intravienne, et introducendola è in tutto contra al naturale, et al vero. Et (per fuggire un simile inconveniente) gli antichi, si sono affaticati in trovare un verso, che quanto è possibile a la prosa si assimigli, perche familiarmente parlando, a niuno o diamo parlare, come saria un verso heroico, o altro simile. Et per questo ha cercato l'authore di questa,” &c. On this subject, see some very judicious observations in the preface to the

Comedies of Terence, translated into familiar blank verse, by G. Coleman, Lond. 1765. The comedies of Ricchi, Trissino, and Ariosto, must have been unknown to Mr. Coleman, else he would not have omitted to cite them in support of his attempt to raise the voice of comedy. But this is not the first time I have had occasion to notice the inattention to, or total ignorance of, Italian literature in England during the last century.

⁶ *Hor. sat. iv. lib. i.* “ Ne me posso astenere di qui recare,” says Gravina, “ quel che scrive Giasen de Nores delle antiche commedie e tragedie, che la maraviglia dal verso nella tragedia, e commedia precede da questo, che essendo versi pajano prosa,” *Della Trag. p. 36.*

This circumstance alone would justify our noticing particularly "*I Tre Tiranni*?" But it has another claim to our attention, as one of the first regular comedies written expressly for hired or mercenary actors or *ISTRIONI*; for the taste for buffooneries, and the *commedia a soggetto*, was so prevalent in Italy about the close of the fifteenth century, says Riccoboni, that the performance of regular comedies was entirely confined to academies.

The three tyrants from which the comedy derives its name, are Worldly Love, Fortune, and Gold. The whole piece is a continued allegory, which Riccoboni acknowledges to be well sustained; but he does not think, with Vellutello, the eulogist of the author, that the construction of the fable is deserving of praise. The action, as he rightly observes, is suspended, while Pilastri- no, one of the personages of the drama, goes on a pilgrimage from Rome to the shrine of St. James, in Galicia in Spain, and continues on this pious journey a whole year⁷.—When the reader is told that this comedy was represented in the presence of the emperor Charles V. and Clement

⁷ *Comedia di Ag. Ricchi da Lucca, intitolata, I Tre Tiranni, recitata in Bologna a N. Signore, et a Cesare, il giorno de la commemoratione de la corona di sua Maestà. Ven. 1533.* This very rare piece is embellished with three rude engravings, exhibiting, probably, the scenery used at the time

of representation. Alacci saw a copy of this comedy, carefully corrected by the author, in the collection of the reverend P. Carlo de' Conti Ladoli. *Dram. Ven. 1755, p. 782.*

⁸ *Hist. du Theat. Ital. tom. i, p. 43.*

VII. He will read with astonishment the following passage in the argument of the piece, which is delivered by the parasite Pilastrino.

O Dio habbia pietà di Pilastrino;
Non dico che mi mandi in Purgatorio,
ficchimi pur ne l'Inferno, e ne l'Imbo,
che pur ch' io mangi tal' hipr duo bocconi,
et bea un ciantellin di malvagia,
ne incaco, Ferraone et Sathenasso.
Et quel poltron di Lucifero porco,
facciarai oome vuol, se ben volesse
farmi in pasticci, o in brodo, o in gelatina, &c.

This passage (which borders so closely on profaneness that I must beg leave to decline translating it) will serve as a specimen of the general argument. Besides a general argument in metre, there is a particular one in prose to each act and scene. It should be observed, too, that the author again violates dramatic propriety, in making Pilastrino, on his return from Spain, suspend the action of the piece, while he expatiates, in the Spanish language, on the victories of his imperial auditor, and the martial achievements of the marquis del Vasto. He takes occasion, at the same time, to make the eulogy of Clement²,

² I shall transcribe the passages to which I allude.—

Non si ricorderebbe più in esempio
de i più famosi, e illustri Semidei,
Augusti, Arsacidi, e Justiniani,

che la fama maggior di Carlo Quinto,
come fa 'l sol con le minori stelle
offuschierebbe i loro accesi lumi.

Felice è certo questa nostra etade,

and his patron, the all-accomplished Hippolito de' Medici.

Hippolito fia l'un, già adorno et carico
di fama tal, che l'Indo, et le Colonne, &c.

If the stage be justly denominated the mirror of the times, we may here behold a pope and an emperor in no very favourable point of view. The ear of rank is so early assailed by, and so long inured to, flattery, that, on a moment's reflection, our wonder ceases, at finding the two potentates in question listening patiently to,—perhaps admiring and enjoying,—the gross praise so profusely lavished upon them. But we are shocked as christians, at beholding the head of the church, and his most Christian Majesty, not only enduring, but encouraging, obscenity and profaneness in a public theatre! It may, perhaps, be urged in extenuation, on the authority of a comedy of Aristophanes, that the attributes of Priapus were sometimes exhibited on the Athenian stage. But we are

quanto altra mai ne fu, quanto ne fia
dopo i di nostri, poichè 'l ciel l'honora
d' un Pontefice tal, che l' alta fede
non manco adorna, e imperla, e in-
gemma, &c.

This absurd practice, so justly
censured by Mr. Pyc. (*Comm. on
Aristotle*, p. 224) passed from the

comic to the tragic stage, and at
length gave birth to the LICENZA
of the modern opera. The origin
of the term Licenza seems to be
very high: it may be traced up
to the rappresentazioni of the six-
teenth century. At the end of *La
Festa di Teseo*, a sacred drama of
that age, it is said, "dipoi viene
l'Angelo che licenzia la Festa."

neither scandalized nor surprised at this circumstance, when we recollect, that this lascivious god was the open guardian of the gardens of the ancients.—But to return.

When Riccoboni reproaches Vellutello with erroneously ascribing to Ricchi the first Italian comedy in verse¹, he seems to misunderstand, or misinterpret, his words. Vellutello only asserts, or rather insinuates, that Ricchi was the first of the Italian comic poets who substituted measured prose, or familiar blank verse, for rhyming metre; and this assertion is, I believe, well-founded; at least I have not been able to discover a comedy of an earlier date in that measure. Nardi, author of the “*Amicizia*,” which Fontanini refers to the year 1494, cannot dispute the palm with Ricchi; for the argument only of his comedy is in *verso sciolto*. And the “*Simillimi*” of his contemporary Trissino, which is entirely in blank verse, was not written, or at least not published, till 1548, above eighteen years after the representation of the “*Tre Tiranni*,” indeed I am inclined to think, that Ricchi’s comedy, at the first representation of which Trissino was, I believe, present, suggested to him the idea of employing that fabric of verse².

¹ *Hist. du Th. It. t. i. p. 185.*

² As Trissino assisted in a diplomatic capacity at the coronation of

Charles, it is natural to suppose he was present at the representation of Ricchi’s comedy.

Having thus endeavoured to confirm the claim of Ricchi to the honour of reviving a ceremonial established by the comic muse of ancient Greece and Rome, I shall briefly notice the various modes of versification used on the Italian stage at the revival of the drama. The first of these seems to have been the TERZA RIMA, invented by Dante³. Several of the dramas, translations as well as original productions, that were exhibited on the temporary stage erected by Ercole I. duke of Ferrara, and in the academies of the Rozzi and Intronati of Sienna, were in this measure,—a measure which, though never used in common conversation, imposes less constraint on the writer, than the jingling couplet, or the stately ottava, and approaches nearer to colloquial ease. But Ariosto, who felt, like Ricchi, that metre without rhyme is essential to the perfection of comedy, totally rejected the musical shackles of his predecessors, and invented, or rather adopted, a measure which, by running “*trippingly on the tongue*,” gave to his dialogue all the easy flow of conversation, and, at the same time, invested it with a kind of dignity suitable to comedy as a

³ *Mem. pour la Vie de Petrarq. t. i. p. 83.* A late writer, in his account of “*Varj metri usati dagl' Italiani intragedia*,” erroneously asserts that, “*la prima fu quella del Trissino che si servi de' versi endecasillabi con varie rime sparse senza ordine.*” *Par. della Poes. d'It. con quella di*

Fran. Zurig. 1732, p. 158. Both the *Seppanissa* of Galeotto del Carretto, and the *Pampila* of Antonio da Pistoia, were antecedent to Trissino's drama; the former of which is in ottava rima, and the latter in terzetti.

poem⁴. This measure, which is denominated **SDRUCCIOLLO**⁵, is a verse of twelve syllables, as will appear from the following lines from the "Cassaria," Att. 1. sc. 2.

Deh vien, Eulalia, poichè non c'è Lucramo
In càsa, vien un poco fuor ; pigliamoci
Questo spaffo.

Come hither, Eulalia, Lucramo is gone,
Come here, when I bid you, and sport in the fun.

Alamanni thought on this subject like Ricchi and Ariosto⁶, and adopted the measure of the

⁴ The *Arcadia* of Sannazaro, which appeared before the comedies of Ariosto, affords several instances of this measure. But the honour of the invention, as Gravina justly remarks, properly belongs to the ancients. *Della trag.* p. 38. In the *Discorso* subjoined to this valuable treatise, he observes, that "nella nostra lingua, la quale è assai tralignata dalla sua stirpe, non si ravvisano sì fatti metri, (he is speaking of the versification of the Greek and Roman stages) e solamente col verso *Sdruciollo* si potrebbe in qualche maniera imitare l'uso del giambico antico, il che con molto artificio, e fenno ha fatto Lodovico Ariosto nelle sue Commedie, con le quali ha voluto anche in questo genere di poesia alzare il pregio della nostra lingua oltra l'usato." P. 100. Ariosto was probably led to this happy innovation by the study of the Greek poets, who seem to have attended, with anxious care, to *Rhythm*. Vid. Burney, *Hist. of Mus.* v. i. sect. 6.

Perhaps our tragic poets would find this practice deserving imitation,—particularly in expressing the movements or workings of the passions.

⁵ *Sdruciollo*. Rime, o versi sdruciolli, diciamo quelli, che dopo l'ultimo accento hanno più sillabe brevi. *Vocal. della Crusca*. This measure derives its name from "*Sdruciollo*, sentiero che va alla china, dove con difficoltà si può andare senza sdruciolare." *Ibid.* Mr. Tyrwhitt observes, that Milton, for the sake of variety of measure, has inserted a very few of these verses, which the Italians call *Sdruciolli*, in his heroic poems; but they are more commonly, says he, and, I think, more properly, employed in dramatic compositions, where a continued stateliness of numbers is less requisite. *Cant. Tal. Lond.* 1775, vol. iv. p. 83.

⁶ Varchi prefers prose in comedy. *Ercol.* p. 341. See, on this subject, the lively and elegant preface to Mr. Hayley's *Plays for a private Theatre*.

former in his "Flora?" As this comedy is extremely scarce, the Italian reader will, perhaps, be pleased to find in this place the reasons which the author assigns for his choice.

Voleva ancor parlar de' versi, e de' numeri
Nuovi, nè più in questa lingua posti in opera,
Simili a quelli già di Plauto, e di Terenzio,
Affermando, che mal convienfi in Comedia,
Ch' è pur poema, la prosa in uso mettere.

This passage is extracted from the prologue, in which it will be perceived that Alamanni has extended his lines beyond the established quantity, employing the measure which the Italians call *SILLABE XIII. L'UNO*. But the practice of Ricchi seems to have met with the most general approbation; for it was, we find, almost universally adopted by such of the succeeding comic writers as ventured to raise the voice of comedy. As a sanction to this practice, I shall close this digression with a decided opinion in its favour by Giraldo Cinthio, to whom the Italian stage has so many obligations. A caviller having urged that Celio Calcagnini, by translating the "Miles Gloriosus" of Plautus⁷ into prose, gave a tacit proof

⁷ The first edition of this comedy appeared in *Fir.* 1556, but the first representation occurred in Paris, in the presence of Henry III. Catharine de' Medici, and Margaret queen of Navarre.

⁸ In 1545, Lœd. Dolci published a poetical version, or rather imitation, of this comedy, in *Ven. per G. Giolito de' Ferrari*. In the prologue, he laments that

quella

of his approbation of the use of prose on the stage, Giraldi replies, that he must have been compelled merely by straitness of time to decline a metrical version; for he had often heard him declare, that all the effusions of the dramatic muse should be clothed in verse². This, continues Giraldi, is not only recommended by Aristotle¹ and Horace, but was the uniform practice of the ancients. And he adds, that though Aristotle translated the "Andria" and "Eunuchus" of Terence into prose, he afterwards evinced his predilection for metre in dramatic compositions, by converting two of his own comedies, which he had originally written in prose, into verse³.

Of the author of "I Tre Tiranni³," which led to these observations on the several forms or modes of versification used on the early Italian stage, something should be related. "Ricchi of Lucca," says Baretti, "was at first a disciple of Aretino, who, in many of his letters, speaks with

quella licentia,
Che diede il mondo a le prime com-
medie,
È tolta da le leggi.

Several subsequent editions of this comedy are enumerated by Allacci.

² Calcagninus has been lately introduced to our notice as a poet by Mr. Moore, who has enriched his *Remarks on Anacreon* with a spirited version of his epitaph on the Teian bard.

¹ Aristotle had been long revered in Italy previous to this period: he

rose with the revival of letters, and continued, many ages, the idol of the literati of that country. Vid. *Some Hints concerning the State of Science at the revival of Letters, grounded on a passage of Dante's Inferno, by the Earl of Charlemont. Transf. of the Roy. Irish Acad.* vol. vi.

³ See his excellent Letter to Alfonso d'Este, subjoined to his *Didone*, Ven. 1583.

³ This comedy has not yet been published detached from the *Opere* of the author, printed in Ven. 1548, and in Verona, 1729.

tenderness of him. He then applied to the study of physic, translated some works of Galen and Oribasius, and acquired so much reputation, that Pope Julius III. made him his physician⁴.—Aretino, in his dialogue “delle Corti,” abuses his friend Ricchi, whom he so tenderly loved; and in Att. v. sc. 3. of his “Marescalco,” he observes, that his comedy was written in his youth, in imitation of the best writers of antiquity.

We have observed, that “I Tre Tiranni” probably suggested to Giovan Giorgio Trissino, the first idea of writing a comedy in familiar blank verse; but in rejecting the prologue⁵, and introducing the chorus in his “Simillimi,” he took for his model the Old Comedy; and in the construction of his fable, he seems to have imitated the intermediate species. In thus blending two different species, Trissino produced an equivocal kind of drama,—a thing to wonder at, rather than admire⁶. Nor did it indeed find admirers,—

⁴ *Ital. Lib. p.* 105.

⁵ Vi lo ancora secondo il costume de gli antichi Greci levato il prologo, et ho fatto narrare lo argomento a le prime persone che in essa parleranno, il che par, che piacesse a Terenzio nostro. *Ded. al Card. Farnese.*

⁶ Of this species is the *Desiderio e Speranza Fantastichi* of Cino di Pistoja. *Ven. 1607, duod.*—“dove si scorge la falsità delle cose mondane, ed il modo di poterle schivare.” In the prologue, the author says he

imitates the ancient poets at a respectful distance,—“con stile remoto.” This moral drama, which consists of 334 pages, seems better calculated to exercise the patience, than improve the mind or morals, of the reader. G. B. Araldo, also, in his *Ingratitudine*, *Fior. 1559*, affects to give a new species of drama,—

Ella non è Comedia, farsa, o festa,
ma un modo così da recitare
più natural ch' i ciel saper ci presta,

at least it found, I believe, no imitators, though the restoration of the chorus to comedy would seem to be recommended by Horace⁷, the great *arbiter elegantiarum* of antiquity. If Plautus were to claim his own property in this piece, little would be left for Trissino but the choruses; for it is, in fact, the “*Menæchmi*” of the Latin poet, altered à l’*Aristophane*⁸. This, however, is honestly acknowledged by the author himself, in his dedication to cardinal Alleffandro Farnese⁹.—Of the versification, the invective against the lawyers shall serve as a specimen, as it seems to illustrate the assertion of the poet’s biographers, that he was a deep sufferer from litigation, and

⁷ *Art. Poet.* l. 284. It would seem, however, that Trissino thought the chorus a necessary part of comedy. “A far la commedia,” says he, “ch’abbia perfezione, si convien rappresentarla ne la scena, onde vi si ricerca, il coro, e la melodia.” *Della. Poet. la sesta divis.*

⁸ Laonde avendo tolto una festiva invenzione da Plauto, vi ho mutato i nomi, et aggiuntevi persone, et in qualche parte cambiato l’ordine, et appresso introdottovi il coro, &c. What Trissino acknowledges to have done, Shakespeare did in his *Comedy of Errors*.

Riccoboni, having observed that the *Menæchmi* of Plautus, “en tout tems ont suffi aux poëtes comiques modernes pour leur donner matiere suffisante pour en faire une comedie parfaite et rempli,” adds, that the great difficulty which attended the representation of this piece on the modern stage, where the mask is proscribed, lay in the impossibility of finding two actors to personate

the brothers, whose resemblance to each other should be so perfect as to render the intended deception probable. But this difficulty was obviated by Cecchi, who, in the stage-directions to his *Moglie*, (a drama compounded of the *Menæchmi* of Plautus and the *Andria* of Terence) says, “che uno stesso Strione può recitare il personaggio di Alfonso, e quello di Ricciardo, cambiando solo l’habito.” Riccoboni supposes “que cette facilité de faire représenter les deux personnages par une seul acteur, est prise entierment de la comedie de la *Moglie* del Cecchi, qui est le seul qui l’aye pensé.” “Les comédiens,” he continues, “ont encheri sur la matiere en doublant l’Arlequin aussi.” *Tom. ii. p. 254.* The first edition of the *Moglie* appeared in 1550. All the comedies of Cecchi were published together. *Ven. 1585.*

⁹ Così ne la commedia, ho voluto servare il modo di Aristofane, cioè de la commedia antica.

feelingly alive to its many vexations'. These lines, out of tenderness to the profession, I shall not translate.

O maledette sian tutte le liti,
Tutti i garbugli, e tutti gli Avvocati,
Nati a ruina de l'umane genti,
Che si nutriscon degli altrui disconci;
Difendendo i ribaldi con gran cura,
E opprimendo i buoni; che i scelesti
Gli son più grati, e di maggior guadagno:
Nè cosa alcuna è scelerata tanto,
Che non ardiscan ricoprirla, e farla
Rimanere impunita da le leggi,
Di cui son la peste, e la ruina.
Sono rapaci, e fraudolenti, e pieni
D'infidie, di perjuri, e di bugie,
Senz' alcun vergogna, e senza fede,
Servi de l'avarizia, e del danaro.
Mentre che stato son sopra 'l palazzo
Quasi tutt' oggi in una lite lunga
D'un mio parente, l'avvocato averfo
Tanto ha ciarlato, &c. &c.

The chorus concludes the piece with a *plaudite*, in the manner of the Roman comedy.

O spettatori, poi ch' avete udita
Questa commedia, alcun di voi non pose
Le palme, e lodi quel che la compose.

The chorus in this piece is composed of sailors, who, we learn from the author's "Art of Poetry,"

¹ *Hist. Mem. on D. Trag.* p. 34.

were to be ranged on the stage in six files, each file consisting of four persons.

VIII. **H**AVING attended the slow progress of the drama in Italy during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, it now remains to give a succinct account of such of the reigning princes and illustrious families as cherished this enchanting art while yet in its infancy ; and to notice the academies instituted for its promotion, occasionally enumerating, or briefly analysing, as we proceed, the most celebrated Italian dramas that appeared in the period under review.

Although Lodovico, detto Il Moro, began his bloody, yet brilliant, administration, by decapitating Cecco Simonetta, the Mæcenas of the court of his predecessor Francesco Sforza, the arts in general, but that of the drama in particular, have great obligations to this ambitious prince. After re-establishing, on the most liberal foundations, several of the public schools of Lombardy, and enticing to his court, by his unbounded munificence, some of the most learned professors of the age², he erected in Milan, in the year 1491, a theatre, on the model of the ancient Roman theatre. As this is allowed to have been the first

² Corrio, *l'Hist. di Milano*, *Pad.* 1646, p. 381.

permanent theatre in Italy, it is to be regretted that neither the exact plan, nor the name of the architect, has reached us.—But the arts did not long enjoy the patronage of Lodovico. Soon after the erection of this edifice, the sceptre, which he had usurped, was wrested from his bloody hand, by Lewis XII. of France, and the remainder of his days were passed in unregretted captivity in the castle of Loches.

Lodovico's passion for theatrical amusements was probably inspired by his kinsman, Ercole I. duke of Ferrara³, who not only promoted, but cultivated, the dramatic art. Under the direction of Ercole Strozzi, the accomplished and unfortunate son of Titus Vespasiano⁴, this munificent prince erected, in the year 1486, a temporary stage on a tribunale⁵, in the court of the ducal palace of Ferrara, for the representation of a version, in terza rima, of the "Menæchmi"⁶ of

³ The third theatrical exhibition in Ferrara, was represented in the presence, and for the gratification, of Lodovico. *El. It.* i. p. 402. It would seem that Ercole occasionally lent the actors in his service to Lodovico. In 1493, says Tiraboschi, Ercole went to Milan to see certain comedies performed by the actors of his own court.

⁴ He was assassinated (1508) by a jealous rival, who aspired to the hand of his Torella. Varillas accuses the duke, his master, of this assassination, but produces no authority. The attachment of Ercole to Torella seems to be the ground of this accusation. The secret aspiration of

Strozzi to the affections of Ercole's sister might have sharpened the dagger.

⁵ An Italian friend supposes that the word *tribunale*, in this place, means a "tavolato costrutto di moltissimi pezzi di legno." From a passage in *Orl. Inn. lib. ii. c. 20. ff. 13*, it would seem that a tribunale was sometimes a seat covered with a canopy. On other occasions, it represented a castle, upon the battlements of which the stage was erected, or the audience seated. *Tiraboschi, Stor. della Poes. It. ii. p. 297. Lond. 1803.*

⁶ *I Menecmi, Ven. presso il Zappino 1530, in 8vo, senza traduttore.* "Questa," says Zeno, "fu la prima

Plautus, which, according to Apostolo Zeno, was partly, if not wholly, executed by the duke himself⁷. This stage, which is said to have cost one thousand ducats, was constructed of wood, and open at the top⁸. The scenery represented some houses, and a sea-port; and a barge, with sails and oars, passed, during the performance, across the stage. On the opposite side of the court, immediately over the chapel, a platform was raised, upon which were seated the duke and duchess, with their attendants. The representation, says Zambotti, the chronologist of Ferrara, lasted to the Ave Maria; but as he does not inform us when it commenced, we cannot ascertain the time of its duration. On the same stage, in the following year (1487), was represented the "Cefalo," a dramatic pastoral, in ottava

favola rappresentata nel teatro nuovo del duca Ercole I." *Ed. It. i. p. 402*. The elder Batista Guarini commemorates the representation of this piece (at which he was present) in an epigram, which bears the following title: *Ludi scenici Ducis Herculis, in quibus Plauti fabula Menæchmi acta fuit*.

Plautini manes, numeri quædæque
lesque,

Cum simili exulta fratre Menech-
me tuo.

Quæ fuerat Latii olim celebrata
theatris,

Herculeæ vobis, scena revixit ope.

⁷ *Lett. t. iii. p. 160*. This assertion of Zeno seems to have been too hastily hazarded; for Giraldis, who had been a retainer of the house of

Este, and was well acquainted with its private history, says, "non aveva il duca Hercole lettere latine." *Cof. di Ferr. p. 134*.

⁸ Tiraboschi mentions an occasion on which the performance was interrupted by a shower of rain.

⁹ The *Fabula di Cefalo* and *la Psiche* of the same author, were published together at *Ven. 1518*. When M. Landi, speaking of this drama, says, "Ce drame est pastoral, et le premier de cette espace," *tom. iii. p. 245*, he seems to forget that the *Orfeo* of Politiano was written and represented at Mantua in 1472. Gibbon, either from ignorance or inadvertency, says, that it was in the court of Ferrara the pastoral comedy was invented,—he should have said, perfected.

rima, and in five acts, by Niccolo Visconti da Correggio, a nobleman equally distinguished in letters and in arms. And on the same stage, and before the same audience, were exhibited a prose version of the "Miles Gloriosus" of Plautus, by Celio Calcagnini, and a translation, in terza rima, of the "Amphitruo" of the same poet, by Pandolfo Collenuccio, author of "Joseph", a sacred drama, written at the desire of Ercole. Besides these dramas, the "Pamphila" of Antonio da Pistoja, and several other pieces, as well originals ⁴ as translations, were presented before this prince. And we are told by Giraldi Cinthio, that the ruling passion of Ercole prevailing to the last, he had appointed the very day on which he died, in the seventieth year of his age, for the exhibition of a new comedy ⁵. But the theatre of this prince derives its chief celebrity from the representation of the "Timone" of Matteo Maria Bojardo, count of Scandiano ⁶,

¹ Ven. 1530. Crescimbeni speaks with contempt of the poetical talents of Collenuccio,—"egli non si alzava molto da terra," says he. *Tom.* iii. p. 307. According to Varrillas, he resembled the Zimri of Dryden: he

Was every thing by starts, and nothing long.

Like his contemporary and friend, Ercole Strozzi, Collenuccio's fate was melancholy,—he was strangled in prison by Giovanni Sforza, who then reigned in Pesaro.

² Ven. 1564.

³ *Hist. Mem. on Ital. Trag.* p. 12.

⁴ It appears from the letters of Bembo, that in the year 1499, the *Trinummus* and *Panulus* of Plautus, and the *Eunuchus* of Terence, were publicly performed at Ferrara before numerous spectators, with great applause. *Fam. Ep. lib. i. ep. 18.*

⁵ *Comm. delle Cose di Ferr.* p. 137, Fior. 1556.

⁶ The first edition of this comedy appeared in octavo, "senza nota d'anno, luogo, e stampatore." The second edition has the following title and colophon: *Timone, Comedia*

the illustrious precursor of Ariosto, in '*the fairy-way of writing*.' However slender the merit of this piece, when considered critically, may appear, the exalted rank which its author justly holds in the republic of letters, intitles it to our particular notice.

Though it is modestly declared in the title-page, that this little drama is a translation of the *Timon* of Lucian, the four first acts only are translated from, or rather may be said to be, a dramatic paraphrase of certain parts of that celebrated dialogue. In the fifth act, the author indulges freely his own invention, and borrows incidents from Plutarch. All this, however, will best appear from the following analysis.

del magnifico conte Matheo Maria Boyardo de Scandiano, traducta de uno dialogo de Luciano a complacencia de lo Illustrissimo principe signore Hercule Este, duca di Ferrara.—At the end,—Qui finisce una comedia dieta Timone traducta de uno dialogo de Luciano per el magnifico condan Matheo Maria Bojardo, stampata in Scandiano

per Peregrino di Pasquale e Gasp. Crivello da Scandiano. Regnante el magnifico conte e cavaliere Misiere Zoanne Bojardo conte de Scandiano, de Casaferrand, de Acceto, Sc. M. 500 adi 12 feo. in 4to. A third edition appeared in Ven. 1504. To this edition is subjoined, Sappha Phaoni, interprete Jacobo Philippo de Pellibus Nigris Troiano.

TIMONE.

TIMON and LUCIAN enter together. The latter turns to the audience, and assures them, that the comedy which is now about to be represented, had never been seen by

Roma triomphante
Nel tempo antiquo de li imperatori.

And adds, that he, a native of Greece, is that day, by the benignity of the sovereign of Ferrara, converted into an Italian.

Di Greco hoggi mi fece Italiano.

He then informs the spectators, that he was sent to detail the argument. This task being performed, he retires.

AA I.

Timon, who remains, begins to dig. After a little while, he pauses,—then, looking towards heaven, utters bitter complaints against mankind in general,—accuses Jove of neglecting to punish the wicked, attributing his remissness to the soporific influence of the mandragola⁷.

⁷ Bojardo, who was one of the best Greek scholars of his day, seems to have understood this passage in the same sense in which it struck

Credo sei di mandragora pasciuto,
Che in ogni tempo ti trovo a dormire.

He complains, that he, who had formerly been so much respected, and had lived in such splendour, at Athens, was become an outcast, and neglected, like an inscription upon a broken monument.

Hor son fugito come un monstro rio.
Come a lettere de una sopoltura
Qual per vecchieza è rotta ne la strata,
Ciaschun trapassa e di guardar non cura.

Jove hears his complaints, and descends on a neighbouring mountain, accompanied by Mercury. The curtains of above open, (*le cortine del cielo se aprino*, say the stage-directions) and Jove, with Mercury, appear. Jove asks, who is that hairy, dirty wretch, that cries so loud, and in so frantic a manner? I presume, says he, from his audacity, that he must be one of that sect of philosophers, so remarkable for impudence and loquacity. Mercury informs him, that he now beholds Timon of Athens, who had formerly sacrificed hecatombs in his temple; and adds, that he owes his present misery to his boundless prodigality. Jove is moved to compassion, and

Gravius. Vid. *Murphy's Lucian*, note (§) on the *Timon*. Dryden and his coadjutors interpret it differently; at least they make no mention of, or allusion to, mandrake. Their words are, "thou sleepest perpetually, as if thou hadst taken a large dose of opium."

desires Mercury to go in quest of Plutus*, and bring him, with a store of wealth, to Timon's relief. We are then told that Mercury leaves Jove sitting (*in sedia*) on the mountain, and, walking along the upper part of the stage (*caminando per el proscenio superiore*), tells the audience, that Jove, wearied by the complaints of Timon, has ordered him to go in quest of the God of Wealth, whom he knows not where to find, as he usually resides with the wicked, or the worthless, part of mankind, with whom, says he, we gods are not acquainted.

Che habita el più cum la cativa gente,
Qual cum noi Dei non ha dimesticheza.

Timon, observing the approach of night, determines to retire to rest, and describes his hut, near a fountain, behind the mountain (Hymettus) upon which Jove is seated.—We are then told, that when Timon has passed the mountain, the curtains close, and the first act concludes.—*Come Timone ha passato el monte, le cortine se chiudeno.*

* Boyardo drops the names of Plutus and Thesaurus, and uniting both those ideal personages, shadows them under a female form, which he calls Ricchezza,

— va Mercurio e mena la Ricchezza
E fa che Ella, &c.

In order to prevent circumlocution and avoid ambiguity, I shall use the name of Plutus throughout my analysis, whenever I shall have occasion to mention the Ricchezza of my author.

As II.

The stage-directions say, that all this act passes in the *scena superiore*, by which Hymettus, the mountain upon which Jove is seated, is meant. Mercury returns, and introduces to his master,

Richeza de arroganza piena.

Plutus with arrogance replete.

A long dialogue ensues, in which Plutus assures Jove that it would be in vain for him to essay to tempt Timon, who had spurned him from him with scorn. Jove's choler rises, and he desires the god to be silent, and obey. Plutus, however, continues to expatiate on the use and abuse of his favours. At length he departs, accompanied by Mercury, who is desired by Jove to bring smiths from Monte Gibello, to sharpen his thunderbolts. The gods, as they travel together, beguile the way with '*various chat*,' in the course of which Plutus reveals the arts by which he imposes on mankind.

As III.

Timon, looking on the ground, which he had been digging, expresses a wish that he could plant it with that herb which is most noxious to man. Mercury and Plutus enter. The latter

observing Timon digging, inquires who he is.— Mercury satisfies him. Poverty⁹, who is discovered by the travelling deities, attendant on Timon, finding that Plutus is come to visit Timon, fears he will render vain all the useful lessons she had given him. Mercury desires her to depart. “I will go,” says she, “but who will receive me? All fly my presence. But Jove commands, and I obey.”

Io ne andero, &c.

Timon asks who these mad people, (*gente lunatico*) who come to molest a poor labourer, are, and threatens to fling a stone at their heads. They intreat he may not injure them, and acquaint him with their being messengers from Jove. He cares not, he says, whence, or from whom, they come, and declares they shall not remain, observing, that he will teach that blind lady (alluding to Plutus under a female form) to trot, though, if he may judge from her appearance, she is not used to dancing.

E questa ciecha che io non la conosco,

Ma non deve esser troppo ufata a danza, &c.

Plutus is frightened, and about to fly; but Mer-

⁹ This is not the first time that Poverty made her appearance on the stage: she and Luxury deliver the prologue to the *Trinummus* of Plautus; and we find her amongst the dramatis personæ of the *Plutus* of Aristophanes.

cury interferes, and prevails on Timon to grant them an hearing. Plutus offers his favours, and employs many powerful arguments to induce him to accept of them. But he continues inflexible, and Mercury departs. Plutus then apostrophizes Thesaurus, (*Dio thesoro occulto*) and desires him to meet the spade of Timon. Timon digs and finds gold. Delighted at the discovery, he resolves to enjoy this unexpected treasure; and, with this view, he will, he says, build a tower, which shall cover the spot where it was found, and live therein secluded from the world. He will, he continues, shun all mankind, and assume the denomination of Misanthrope (*Misanthropo me stesso appello*). He then determines to pass the mountain, and seek for some place in which to hide his gold.

ACT IV.

Fame enters. After informing the audience who she is, and how swift she flies, she says, that she heard Timon had discovered gold,—a circumstance which, he vainly hopes, she will not proclaim; for she tells all she knows. When she departs to spread the news, Timon appears, complaining of the misery attendant on the care of wealth, and resolves to conceal his treasure under a large stone, and not even minister any part of it, to extricate his son Philocles from his

difficulties. He sees some people approaching, one of whom he knows to be Gnathonides, the poet. Gnathonides meets him with a flattering salutation, to which Timon rudely replies. The poet endeavours to soften him, by saying, that he brings him a dithyrambic ode.

Io te ho portato uno canto adythirambi, &c.

He threatens to strike the poet, who departs. Philiaides then enters. Timon upbraids him with ingratitude, and he also departs. Demeas is not better received. Observing Thrasycles, the philosopher, he says, his thick beard and melancholy visage give him the appearance of a triton. This glutton, who is always preaching abstinence, he calls a sack without a bottom, (*sacco senza fondo*) and relates, that one evening, when he supped with him, the page who attended was weary with carrying him drink. The philosopher recommends it to Timon, either to throw his gold into the sea, or distribute it amongst the poor; because

el suo possessor non fa contento.

The wealthy never are content.

Timon strikes him, and he flies.

As V.

Auxilio¹ (an allegorical personage, that seems, like Fame, in the preceding act, to supply the office of the chorus) opens this act with an address to the audience, saying, that they ought to rise and salute him with uncovered heads, as he is ever ready to aid those who stand in need of assistance. His motive, he continues, for coming to them, is to assist them in understanding the following act, of which he proceeds to deliver the argument. Timon having given a certain portion of his wealth to his son, Philocles, affects to feel the approach of death, and calling his son to him, gives him a sealed letter, which he desires him, on no account, to open; but, at the expiration of ten years, to bring or send it to his sepulchre. He is afterwards borne to his tomb, without lights, in a dark night. After this detail, Timon appears watching his wealth, and complaining of the misery attendant on such a charge. Philocles being thrown into prison for debt, recollects the letter, and sends his servant, Parmenio, with it to the tomb. Parmenio, accompanied by Cyrus, meets Timon at the sepulchre, and a long scene ensues, in which Cyrus thus defines a freeman.

¹ This character was evidently borrowed from the *Cistellaria* of Plautus, in which a god, called

Auxilium, is introduced (*As. i. sc. 3.*) to unfold the plot of the comedy.

Libero è quel che a se solo obedisse,
 Che strengie il freno a la cupiditate
 Ne la avaritia el pongie come io disse

Non teme el sciemo de la povertate,
 E non estima el colmo de la ricchezza,
 Ne per fortuna cangia qualitate ;

Non cura infamia, e la fama despreccia,
 Se me trovi uno a tal modo sincero,
 De Libertate io te daro certecchia.

That man is free whom reason only sways,
 Who rules his passions with a steady rein ;
 Not led by love of gold thro' miry ways,
 Nor scar'd by want with all her haggard train.

Not wealth's proud eminence he longs to climb,
 Nor shifts with fortune his camelion mind ;
 Praise and dispraise, alike unheeded, chime
 On his purg'd ear, to nobler themes inclin'd.
 Shew me that man, and I will point to thee
 The vassal of the gods and genuine Liberty.

*

With this definition Timon is much pleased, and expatiates on it,—then drives Parmenio and his companion away. He then tells the spectators, that he would most willingly lend any of them, who might wish to hang themselves, the cord that binds his waist. Having made this offer, he departs. Auxilio returns,—relates the fate of the vase which contained Timon's wealth, and concludes the piece with saying,

A Dio vi lasso e lui richi vi faccia.

To God I leave ye, may he bounteous prove !

THIS little piece, like Shakespeare's play on the same subject, affords a very powerful warning against that ostentatious liberality which scatters bounty, but confers no benefits; and buys flattery, but not friendship*. It will not, however, raise Boyardo to an exalted rank amongst the early dramatic writers of his country. With humorous sallies it certainly abounds; but we seldom discover in it the magic hand that raised the gorgeous epic fabric upon the loves and warlike feats of the paladines of the court of Charlemagne. Though divided into acts and scenes, there is no regularity of construction in the fable. Unity of place is observed, but unity of time is grossly violated. The mountain upon which Jove descends remains throughout the whole progress of the action; nor do we ever lose sight entirely of the retreat of Timon; for Mercury and Plutus, who are supposed to perform a long journey, only wind round the mountain, in the presence of the audience. The suspension of the fable, while Auxilio addresses the spectators, is one of the vices of the Old Comedy. And Timon's appearance, after abiding ten years in the sepulchre, is a shocking violation of the unity of time. But as the author modestly calls his comedy a translation of a dialogue of Lucian,

* Dr. Johnson.

it should not be treated with the severity of criticism, nor judged according to the rigorous letter of the dramatic laws.

From this drama, two conclusions may be drawn in regard to the state of the theatre of Ferrara in the time of the author. 1. That the scenes were not moveable. 2. That the *velu*, or curtain, then in use, was not an entire piece, (as in the present day) but divided into two parts, which opened and exposed the stage³.

1. If the scenes had been moveable, the journey of Mercury and Plutus would not, it may be presumed, have been performed in the presence of the audience.

2. And when we are told that the curtain opens, we naturally conclude it was divided into two parts, like the *adorno* of the early Spanish stage, and attached by rings to a rod, or an extended cord drawn tight, along which it was occasionally led in different directions; or perhaps it was so hung as to admit of its being drawn up in a festoon. This latter mode of disposing of the curtain certainly prevailed in Florence when

³ El adorno del Theatro era una manta vieja, tirada con dos cordeles de una parte à otra. Vid. *Prolog.* to *El Gallardo Español* of Cervantes, in which several other very curious particulars of the early Spanish stage may be found.—It is deserving remark, that in the stage-directions of *The first day's entertainment*, exhibited at Rutland-house by Sir William

Davenant, soon after his return from the continent, we are told,—“the curtains are drawn open,”—“the curtains are closed;”—a practice which seems to have been immediately discontinued on the English stage, and never after revived. *Works of Sir W. Davenant*, Lond. 1673, fol. p. 358, 359.

" *Le Nozze degli Dei* " was performed in 1637, on occasion of the marriage of Ferdinand II. duke of Tuscany, with Vittoria princess of Urbino. Yet Bojardo's immediate successor, Ariosto, gives us a different idea of the construction of the stage-curtain, in the following passage in the "*Orlando Furioso*," where Melissa's reception at the romantic castle of Trifano is described,—

al veder de le cortine fuote

Parer, fra mille lampade, la scena ¹.

From this it would seem, that the exposition of the stage, with all its lights and scenery, was the immediate consequence of the *fall* of the curtain; but how it was disposed of after, during the representation, does not appear, nor can I conceive, unless by supposing it was received in a groove, or that it continued to lumber the stage, till it was raised again. It is the opinion of a friend deeply skilled in the construction of theatres, " that the Italians, perhaps, used the same word to express the drop-scene and the curtain,

¹ See the frontispiece to the edition of this drama, printed *In Fir.* per *Amad. Massi, e Lev. Lodi*, 1637.

² *Cont.* xxxii. *ss.* 80. Probably misled by the practice of the English stage, none of the English translators of Ariosto seem to have rendered the passage in question faithfully.

When curtains be remov'd that all did hide. *Harrington.*

As when the curtain's drawn away, &c. *Huggins.*

As when, the scene undrawn, &c. *Hood.*

though they might differ as to the application of the term⁶. The curtain, he continues, when raised, might open, or disclose the drop-scene behind it, exhibiting any required subject; but I cannot conceive, he continues, by what piece of mechanism it could be possible to disengage the curtain from the ceiling, with all the lines or cords by which it must be fastened to the pulleys; or how, from its magnitude, it could be contained in any trough on, or groove in, the stage; or what could supply its place, after the act or scene had been exhibited⁷."

⁶ This is not improbable; for the drop-scene was evidently an improvement on the traverse of the early English stage; an awkward substitute for scenery, which might also have prevailed on the Italian stage at the same period. "Beside the principal curtains that hung in the front of the stage," says Mr. Malone, "they (the English) used others as substitutes for scenes, which were denominated *Traverses*. Vid. *Hist. acc. of the Eng. stage*, (p. 199). Perhaps the journey of Mercury and Plutus, in the comedy of *Timon*, was performed under cover of a traverse.

⁷ The ingenious conjecture of my friend seems to receive further support from the practice of the Italian stage at a subsequent period, as described by Marino. In his account of the representation of the tragedy of *Atteone* in the *Adone*, he says,

Et hor che per cacciar dal veder
prato

Il Thebano garzone il piè retira,
Tosto che sù 'l gran vertice forato
Il ferrato baston messo si gira,
Cangia sito la scena, e l'apparato

In altro aspetto trasformar, si mira;
Et al cader de la primiera tela,
Diferenti apparenze altrui rivela.

Cant. v. st. 131.

Vasari, in his minute and interesting description of the *Apparato per le Nozze del principe D. Francesco di Toscano*, mentions the fall of the curtain at the commencement of the comedy: "Al cascar della tela," says he, "scoprendersi la luminosa prospettiva ben parve, che il Paradiso con tutti i cori degli angeli si fusse in quello istante aperto; la qual credenza fu meravigliosamente accresciuta da un suavissimo e molto maestrevole, e molto pieno concerto d'istrumenti, e di voci." *Tom. vii. p. 338.* In closing this description, I am induced to observe, that such a brilliant scene bursting suddenly on the view, amidst a full chorus of vocal and instrumental music, must have seemed to realize some of the most splendid fictions of the Gothic romance. While we are admiring the celestial visions of Milton, we should recollect that his radiant fancy sometimes fed on such scenes during his Italian tour.

I shall close this digression with the whole stanza, of which I have just quoted a part, in order to shew the splendour of scenic decorations at this early period of the Italian stage.

Quale al cader de le cortine fuole
Parer, fra mille lampade, la scena.
D'archi, e di più d'una superba mole,
D'oro, e di statue, e di pitture piena.

Thus, at the curtain's gradual fall, we spy,
Amidst a thousand lamps, a prospect fair,
Triumphal arcs, proud piles that threat the sky,
Statues, and fretted gold, and pictures rare.

*

This dazzling splendour of a "*mille lampade*" probably prevailed so late as the time of Ingegneri; for we find him proposing a mode of concealing from the spectator the source of the light intended to illuminate the scene, and recommending, at the same time, to place the lamps, and chandeliers, or branches, in such a situation as would preclude the possibility of their impeding the ingress and egress of the performers. Let the lights, says he, be suspended from the ceiling, and a shallow fringe, suitably ornamented, drop in front, in order to conceal them from the audience. And this, he adds, may be done without injury to the scenic illusion, or the ap-

pearance of the stage in general⁸. It is also the opinion of the same writer, that a general obscurity should prevail in every part of the theatre, except the stage⁹.

From this digression we shall proceed to the author by whose drama it was occasioned.

Matteo Maria Bojardo, count of Scandiano, was born about the year 1434, in Fratta, according to Mazzuchelli; but Barotti and Tiraboschi, with more appearance of probability, suppose this event to have taken place in Scandiano, a fief of the house of Bojardo, whence Matteo Maria derived his title¹. He was the son of Giovanni Bojardo, and of Lucia Strozzi, sister of the celebrated Tito Vespasiano. Where he acquired the rudiments of his education does not appear; but we find that he was removed, at a very early period of life, to the university of Ferrara, where he was placed under the immediate care of Socino Benzi². Here he enjoyed the in-

⁸ *Della Poes. rappresent. p. 65. Ferr.* 1598.

⁹ *Ibid.* The general obscurity which has so long prevailed, and still continues to obtain, in the Italian theatres, probably owes its origin to the suggestion of Ingegneri.

¹ *Tiraboschi, tom. vi. p. 934.* "My curiosity," says Baretti, "carried me once in my youth to visit Scandiano, the birth place of Bojardo, who, amongst our poets, was, in my opinion, the most richly endowed with the rare gift of invention. Scandiano," he continues, "is a poor town,

in the duke of Modena's dominions, but a place of some consideration in Bojardo's time, as it was then the chief place of a small absolute sovereignty, descended to this poet by a long series of ancestors, who called themselves counts of Scandiano." *Ann. of Italy, vol. ii. p. 236.*

² Bojardo was not the only dramatic poet who received his education under Socino Benzi: Giraldi, to whom (as I have elsewhere endeavoured to shew, *Hist. Mem. on It. Trag. p. 76*) the drama had many obligations, was also his pupil. Giraldi

struction of Guarino Veronese³ in the Greek language, which he continued, during the remainder of his days, to cultivate with great ardour and success. Of his profound skill in this language, his translations from Lucian, Herodotus, and Xenophon, are existing monuments. In 1469, he was sent, with other nobility of the court of Borso, to meet the emperor Frederic III. and conduct him to Ferrara, whither he was repairing to visit Borso, whom he had, a few years before, created duke of Modena⁴, out of gratitude for the hospitable and splendid reception he had experienced at his court. In 1471, he was again honourably distinguished by the amiable and munificent Borso. On receiving an invitation from Paul II. to repair to Rome, in order to receive, at the hands of his holiness, the ducal

has evinced his gratitude to his master, by making the *elogio* of the house of Benzi in his *Comm. delle Cose di Ferr. Fior. 1556, p. 110—111.*

³ Guarino closed his erratic life in 1469, in the Greek professor's chair in the university of Ferrara. He had been a pupil of the celebrated John of Ravenna. Having finished his Latin studies under this great man, he undertook a voyage to Constantinople, for the express purpose of reading the Greek classics in the school of Manuel Crisoloras. One of his biographers relates, that he was so much affected by the loss of a chest full of books that he had collected during his residence at Constantinople, which perished in a shipwreck, that his hair became grey in the space of a single night. Is it to be wondered at that

the instructions of so profound a scholar, and so enthusiastic an admirer of the literature of Greece, should sink deep into the mind of Bojardo! Guarino was the founder, in Ferrara, of the Guarini family; a family highly distinguished in the republic of letters, and endeared to the lovers of the drama by the *Pastor Fido*.

⁴ The account of this investiture, by a modest and anonymous author, while it evinces the wealth, the splendour, and the politeness, of the court of Borso, justifies the assertion of Gibbon, that the crowns, the mantles, and the sceptres, used in these ceremonies, were second only to the majesty of kings. *Hist. of the House of Este, Lond. 1681, p. 191. Antiq. of the House of Brunsf. vol. 3.*

crown of Ferrara, Borso added Bojardo to his train on this occasion. This train, which consisted of five hundred gentlemen, the chamberlains and pages of the court, one hundred menial servants, and one hundred and fifty mules, were clothed, according to their degree, in brocade, velvet, or fine cloth: the bells of the mules were of silver; and the dresses, liveries, and trappings, covered with gold and silver embroidery. Having assisted at the pompous investiture, he returned from Rome, in 1472, and retired to Scandiano, where he married Taddea Gonzaga, of the family of the counts of Novellara. Borso dying soon after his investiture, he was succeeded by his nephew, Ercole I. who, inheriting the passion for letters which had so long distinguished the family of Este, invited Bojardo to his court, and honoured him with the most flattering reception. "In the court of duke Borso and his successor," says Gibbon, "Bojardo, count of Scandiano, was respected as a noble, a soldier, and a scholar." A treaty of marriage being set on foot between Ercole and Eleanora of Arragon, daughter of the king of Naples⁵, Bojardo was nominated

⁵ While Eleanora, on her way to Ferrara, paused in Rome, the Festa of S. Susanna was exhibited, for her gratification, by the Florentine actors in the service of Cardinal Riario, in the piazza de' Santi Apostoli, which, says Tiraboschi, the cardinal "fece coprire, e fece certi tavolati

intorno alla detta piazza con panni di arazzo, e tavole a modo di una loggia e corridore; et anche sopra lo porticale di detta chiesa fece un'altra bella loggia tutta ornata, et in que tavolati fu fatta la Festa." *Stor. della Poef. It. tom. ii. p. 290. Lond. 1803.* I refer with pleasure to this

by the duke to conduct his intended bride to Ferrara. In the state-paper which contains his appointment, he is called *clarissimum et insignem virum*, by the duke, who bestows on him, in the same paper, other epithets equally flattering. This gracious earnest of the duke's favour, was followed by an appointment to the government of Reggio, from which he was removed to the more honourable and lucrative office of Capitano of Modena. But he did not long enjoy this exalted situation. Addicted to pleasure, and devoted to his muse, he neglected the duties of his office, and merited, if he did not suffer, the displeasure of his patron. In 1494, he retired to Reggio, where he died, on the night of the 21st of December, in the castle of that city, a venerable edifice, within whose walls, about twenty years before, Ariosto had been born⁶;—an event which, by a secret and insensible operation on the mind of the Homer of Ferrara, might have irresistibly impelled him to the source whence the “Orlando Furioso” flowed,—the *fonte, onde poi è uscito il Furioso*⁷, are the words of Gravina, speaking of the “Orlando Innamorato.” As the cause of Bojardo's death is not mentioned by any

correct and elegant re-publication of the most interesting part of Tiraboschi's elaborate work.

⁶ Ariosto's father, who had been in his youth a companion of Borso, and after that, majordomo to Ercole

I. was Bojardo's predecessor in the government of Reggio. It was while he filled that office the poet was born (1474) in the castle.

⁷ *Rag. della Poet. lib. ii.*

of his biographers, Fancy may attribute it to the shock which his exquisite sensibility received on hearing that the French armies had entered Italy, and were spreading death and devastation before them. The effect which this intelligence had on his feelings, appears from the abrupt manner in which he breaks off, in a very interesting narrative, in lib. iii. cant. 9. of his "Orlando Innamorato."

Mentre ch'io canto gli amorosi detti
 Di queste donne da l'inganno prese,
 Sento di Francia riscaldarsi i petti
 Per disturbar d'Italia il bel paese.
 Alte roine con rabbiosi effetti,
 Per che dimostra il ciel col fiamme accese,
 E Marte irato, con l'orrida faccia
 Di quà, e di là, col ferro ne minaccia.

Thus, while indulgent to the amorous vein,
 I sing those nymphs, entrapt in Cyprian snares,
 Lo! proud ambition fires the Gallie train,
 And dreadful plagues for Italy prepares.
 With red meteorous menace, heaven declares
 The tempest brooding in the human breast,
 And soon to burst abroad in wasteful wars,
 While Mars, in bloody mail superbly dress'd,
 His fiery falchion waves, and threatens East and West.

*

Having thus given vent to his feelings, and painted the horrors of the coming storm, he expresses a doubt of his ever resuming the interrupted

tale,—the pen drops from his hand,—and, with the prophetic sigh which he breathed on closing the poem, his soul seems to have fled !

The remains of Bojardo were interred in Reggio⁸; but not a stone tells where the original artificer, or inventor, of the Gothic epic lies. Posterity, however, has been grateful to his memory; and he shares, with his great continuator⁹, the respect and admiration which the wonderful poem of that "heav'n-born genius" imperiously demands. The vigorous fancy of Bojardo, says Gibbon, "first celebrated the loves and exploits of the paladine Orlando; and his fame has at once been preserved and eclipsed by the brighter glories of the continuation of his work." By his wife Taddea, Bojardo had two sons and four daughters. His eldest son Camillo succeeded to the title and fief of his father.

The period in which Bojardo began his epic

⁸ Tiraboschi was informed, that the remains of Bojardo were transported from Reggio, and deposited in the Rocca. But the MS. which contains this account, and which is said to have been written by a priest who assisted at the removal, escaped the researches of the historian of Italian literature. The portrait of Bojardo may still be seen, according to Tiraboschi, in "un gabinetto della Rocca di Scandiano." VI. p. 384.

⁹ Before Ariosto took up the subject, a feeble attempt to complete Bojardo's plan had been made by Niccolò degli Agostini. His conti-

nuation, consisting of three books, was published at different times. The first book, with the original work, appeared at Ven. 1506. The last book, which was undertaken at the suggestion of the printer, was published in 1515. It does not seem that Niccolò, in the composition of his supplement, attended to the precept of Horace, *sapè stylum vertas*; indeed he acknowledges that the last book was written in ten days. It is hardly necessary to add, that the original work was newly verified, or rather travestied, by Francesco Berni.

poem is not known : it was probably during the enjoyment of the dignified ease for which he was indebted to Ercole I. According to Barotti, it was sung, canto by canto, in the court of that prince, whose hospitable board realized the '*feast of reason and the flow of soul*.' It was thus Tigellius, at the table of Augustus, chanted, *ab ovo usque ad mala*, to the accompaniment of his tetrachord, the dithyrambic ode of *Io Bacche*¹. The model which Bojardo followed is thought to have been the metrical romance of the bards of Provence. But Gravina refers the origin of his poem to a purer source,—*da molto più limpida, e larga vena trasse egli l'invenzione*². He considers the "Iliad" of Homer as the archetype of the "Orlando In-

¹ *Hor. Sat. iii. lib. i.* The author of *Gondibert* honestly acknowledges, that "the reason that prevailed most towards his choice of the stanza in which that poem is written, and the division of the main work into cantos, was the hope that his poem (like the works of Homer ere they were joined together and made a volume by the Athenian king) might be sung at village feasts." *Lett. to Mr. Hobbes*. This hope has not, I believe, been realized; but the spirits of the epic poets of Italy still "wander in music." Baretti has preserved the airs to which the poems of Ariosto and Tasso are, at this day, sung in Venice and in Florence. *Acc. of Italy*, vol. ii. p. 154, 175.

² *Della Rag. Poet. Rom.* 1708, p. 180. This opinion of Gravina in regard to the origin, or rather the formation, of the *Orlando Innamorato*, seems to be adopted by Bishop Hurd,

and applied to later productions of the same kind. "There is," says he, "a remarkable correspondence between the manners of the old heroic times, as painted by their great romancer, Homer, and those which are represented to us in the books of modern knight-errantry." *Lett. on Chival.* p. 26. This just remark is confined to the epic poems of Ariosto, Tasso, and Spenser, which appear to have composed the Gothic library of this truly learned and ingenious prelate. Bojardo's poem he nowhere notices, though it was the broad and solid basis upon which the splendid structure of the *Orlando Furioso* was raised, and the model followed, with various success, by the succeeding artificers of the Gothic epic. The impression which this poem made upon the mind of Milton appears in *Par. Reg. b. iii. v.* 336—344.

namorato," observing, at the same time, that, in conformity to the taste of his age, the author substituted fairies and magicians for the gods and demi-gods of the Grecian mythology. But it was from Turpin he drew his subject; and the French and Spanish romances, which were the favourite study of the day³, probably supplied some of the embellishments, as well as many of the characters. It is asserted by Castelvetro, that several of the inferior paladins or knights were Bojardo's own tenants or vassals, whom he transferred from Scandiano to fairy-land⁴, where they support their real characters under feigned names, but bear no marks by which they can now be distinguished. Had the author lived to revise, polish, and conclude, this poem, he would, probably, have rendered it a work worthy the admiration of posterity⁵. With all its imperfections, however, it challenges our respect; it has, too, a claim on our gratitude; because (to borrow the words of Cervantes) "it was upon the invention of the renowned Mateo Bojardo, the christian

³ *Prof. e Poef. del Conti, t. ii. p. 233.*

⁴ *Pect. p. 212.*

⁵ The *Orlando Innamorato* seems to have attracted notice soon after publication. It is thus glanced at by Galeotto, marquis of Carretto, a contemporary poet, in his *Tempio de Amore*. When l'Accoglienza and l'Amicitia enter the temple of Love together, the latter points out the portrait of Bojardo among the se-

veral paintings which adorn the walls.—

l'altra è del conte
Qual già canto d'Orlando, ch'imo in
vano
De Angelica crudel la bella fronte.

⁶ It cannot but be matter of surprise, that no modern translation of the *Orlando Innamorato* has appeared. In the very rare version of 1598, the

poet, Lodovico Ariosto, weaved his ingenious web⁷." It is the opinion of Dionigi Atanagi, that Bojardo's genius was better calculated to excel in lyric than in epic poetry⁸; and he adduces, in support of his assertion, some of the lighter effusions of his muse. One of these we shall transcribe, and leave the reader to decide.

SONETTO.

Canta un' angello in voce sì soave,
Ove Meandro il vado obliquo aggira;
Che la sua morte prende con diletto.
Lasciar l'usate ripe non gli è grave:
Ma con dolce harmonia l'anima spira:
Nè voce cangia al fin, nè muta aspetto.
L'onda del fiume il nuovo canto ammira:
Ed ei fra l'erbe fresche a la rivera
(Perche nel suo gioir doglia non spera)
Segue cantando, ove natura il tira.
Così me tragge questa bella fera
A' volontaria morte, e dolce tanto,
Che per lei moro: e pur morendo canto.

language is too obsolete to afford pleasure to the modern reader. For this version we are indebted to Robert Tofte, who also translated *Two Tales out of Ariosto. The one in dispraise of men. The other in disgrace of women. With certain other Italian fables and proverbs.* Lond. 1597. Vid. Ritson's *Bibliog. Poetica*, Lond. 1802, p. 362.

⁷ La invencion del famoso Mateo Boyardo, de donde tambien texió su tela el Christiano poeta Ludovico Ariosto. *Don Quixote*, lib. i. cb. 6. Dryden observes, that Tasso also

"borrows from the invention of Boyardo; and (he adds with severity) in his alteration of his poem, which is infinitely for the worse, he imitates Homer very servilely." *Ded. to the Sat. of Juvenal.* Tasso's obligations to Bojardo are also remarked by the late Mr. Warton—"Many striking passages," says he, "which Tasso has borrowed from Bojardo, are unnoticed." *Poet. Works of J. Milton*, Lond. 1801, vol. v. p. 348.

⁸ *Delle Rime di div. nob. poet. Tos. Ven.* 1565, Tav. t. ii,

Sweet sings the bird, how musically sweet !

Where smooth Meander winds his liquid maze,

No cold presages damp her tuneful lays,

Tho' in yon wave condemn'd her death to meet.

She grieves not, tho' no more she must survey

Those flowery borders where she sported long ;

Softly she hails them with concluding song,

And breathes her soul in harmony away :

The unaccustom'd strain the waves admire,

And she that seems conducted by the muse,

Sails down the stream, instinctive to her doom.

So my Melissa's charms my song inspire,

And ev'n in death, the tuneful vein renews,

Although her pride condemns me to the tomb.

*

Besides the " Orlando Innamorato " , the comedy which we have analysed, and the translations¹ to which we have alluded, Bojardo wrote several sonnets, and canzone, and five capitoli in terza rima. All these pieces have been imparted by the press. But his " Carmen Bucolicum," consisting of ten Latin eclogues, still remain undated in the Biblioteca Estensi².

¹ The first edition of this poem was printed in *Scandiano*, 1496, at the desire of Cammillo, the eldest son of the author. Several subsequent editions are enumerated by Ap. Zeno, in his notes on the *Eleg. Ital.* of Fontanini.

² The first Italian version of the *Golden Ass* of Apuleius is attributed to Bojardo. As the publication of this translation in 1518, was soon

after followed by the *Cupidine e Psyche* of Galeotto del Carretto, it may be supposed to have given birth to that drama. The best Italian translation of this equally ingenious and indecent production, is said to be that of Agnolo Firenzuola, which appeared in *Fir.* 1549.

³ Haym ascribes to Bojardo a poem intitled *Philogene*, which he says he saw in the " libreria regia

ALFONSO, the son and successor of Ercole I.³ seems to have been not less anxious than his father to unfold the Roman scene upon the Italian stage⁴, nor less solicitous to promote the modern drama. He suggested to Giraldis Cinthio a subject for a tragedy, employed Ariosto to translate the "Andria" and the "Eunuchus" of Terence⁵, and afterwards erected a stage, under the direction of that versatile genius, expressly for the representation of the "Cassaria"⁶, and his other comedies, the prologue to one of which ("La Lena") was recited by Don Francesco, a son of the duke. Of this theatre no description remains; but it would seem, from a passage in the prologue to the "Negromante," that it could boast no variety of

di Westminster." *Not. de' Lib. rari. Lond. 1726, p. 115.* But if he saw this poem, he must have examined it very superficially; for Mr. George Nicol, who was so obliging, at my desire, as to inspect it, informs me it was written by Andrea Baiardo of Parma. It is called *Libro d'Arme*, and consists of nearly 3700 stanzas, in ottava rima. It was printed Ven. 1535.

³ The characters of Ercole and Alfonso are drawn by Giraldis, in his *Hecatommithi, Part second, nov. 1, 11, and Comm. delle Cose di Fer. Fir. 1556.*

⁴ Although the Roman comic poets seem to have seized upon, and kept forcible possession of, the Italian stage, soon after the revival of the drama, their intricacy of plot gave way, in the succeeding century, to the simplicity of the comic stage of ancient Greece. "I poeti

comici Italiani del secolo decimosesto," says G. G. de Rossi, "fra i quali alcuni meritano somma lode, non ci danno per lo più esempj di commedie, che tendano al gusto dei romanzi: anzi al contrario ci dipingono semplici avvenimenti." *Rag. sulle sue Commedie. Bass. 1790.*

⁵ *Lett. al duca Eric. II.* subjoined to the *Didone* of Giraldis. *Trag. Ven. 1583.*

⁶ According to Giraldis, this stage was erected expressly for the representation of the *Cassaria*. It is related by an annalist of Ferrara, that "lo stesso teatro rimase consumato dal fuoco, che vi si accese l'ultimo giorno del 1531," and that Ariosto, "perchè ne fu l'architetto, ed era appunto a proposito per le sue commedie, tanto se ne attristò, che ne morì, più per il dispiacere di quell'incendio, che per altro." See also *Hist. Mem. on It. Trag. p. 289.*

scenery ; at least no attempt was made at localizing. The scene which represented Ferrara when " La Lena " was exhibited, was feigned to be Cremona at the representation of " Il Negromante."

Ercole II. who succeeded Alfonso, inherited his father's passion for the drama. When Paul III. visited his court, he had the " Adelphi " of Terence, in the original Latin, exhibited in the presence of that pontiff, by his own children of both sexes, who were yet, says Giraldi, in their infancy,—*anchora bambini*.

After this rapid view of the stage of Ferrara, I think the reader will be inclined to admit, that when Ingegneri tells Don Cesare d'Este, that almost all the eminent dramatic poets who flourished before his time, were either protégés, vassals, or servants, of the house of Este, he speaks the language, not of flattery, but of truth⁷.

We have not been able to ascertain the exact year in which dramatic spectacles were first exhibited in the court of Mantua, but we are inclined to think that this court may dispute priority in that elegant species of amusement, even with the court of Ferrara⁸. For it appears from the con-

⁷ Vid. dedication to his *Disc. della Poef. Rapp. Fer.* 1598. " The family of Este," says Mr. Roscoe, " may be considered as powerful rivals of the Medici in the encouragement of learning and arts." Vol. i. p. 129, note (a). See also *Hecat. part ii. nov. I.*

⁸ Tiraboschi has preserved a very curious letter from Ercole I. to Francesco, marquis of Mantua, dated Feb. 1496, from which it appears

curing testimony of several writers, that the "Orfeo" of Politiano was exhibited in Mantua, three years at least, if not more, before the stage of Ercole I. was erected. Cardinal Gonzaga, before whom this piece was represented, died in 1483, and the dramatic exhibitions in Ferrara, under Ercole, did not commence till 1486. Of the theatre of Mantua no description has reached us; but it may be presumed the scenery was moveable, from the changes which must necessarily have taken place during the performance of the "Orfeo". The scene of the three first

that the sovereigns of Mantua evinced an early and anxious desire to promote the cultivation of the drama in their court. Francesco having requested copies of some of the Italian comedies which had been represented in Ferrara, Ercole laments he cannot comply with his requisition; because, says he, "quando nui faceffimo recitare diete commedie, il fu dato la parte sua a cadauno de' quelli che li havevano ad intervenire, acciocch' imparassero li versi a mente, et dappoi che furon recitate, nui non haveffimo cura di farle ridurre altramente insieme, ne tenerne copia alcuna." He then adds, that several of the actors amongst whom the parts were thus distributed, were, at that time, dispersed in different countries, some in France, others in Naples, &c. Amongst the names of the actors mentioned in the margin, we find Pignatta and Francesco Ruino. (*Stor. della Poes. It. Lond. 1803, tom. ii. p. 311.*) But of their various merits no record remains. The actor's art yields no objects, and, therefore, leaves no trace. It is true, that in such Masks

of the ancients as have escaped the voracity of time, the passions are expressed;—but it is by the hand of the painter! One faithful and lively picture of a characteristic posture on the Roman stage, however, exists; it is that of Davus in Horace.

Davus sis comicus; atque
Stes capite obstituto, multum similis
metuenti.

Sat. lib. ii. sat. 5. l. 91, 92.

⁹ Machinery was often employed in the representation of the mysteries of the 15th century. But I believe the earliest instance of moveable scenery on the Italian stage, is the one mentioned in the text. From Mantua the practice soon passed to Ferrara; but it was very slow in spreading through the other Italian states. It was still more slow in reaching England; for the indefatigable Mr. Malone has not been able to trace moveable scenes upon the English stage higher than the year 1605. *Stevens's Shakespeare, vol. ii. p. 190r*

acts lies near a fountain, at the foot of a lofty mountain. But at the commencement of the fourth act, Orpheus appears at the gates of hell, through which we see him pass to the foot of Pluto's throne, and return soon after with Eurydice. In the fifth act, the scene of the three first is resumed; at least the scenery is pastoral. We learn from the early editions of the stage-directions of this little drama, that Baccio Ugolino, the celebrated Improvvisatore, was the principal performer; but of his talents as an actor nothing is recorded: we may, however, conclude, that he was endued with uncommon vocal powers, since he was chosen to personate the Theban bard, whose voice could '*bend a knotted oak.*' By whom the other characters were exhibited does not appear; nor have we been able to discover whether or not a company of comedians formed part of the establishment of the court. But if the authority of Sir Thomas Urquhart may be relied on, there appeared, in 1583, on the stage of this court, a gentleman-actor, who was '*himself an boist.*' It is related by this quaint writer, that while the Admirable Crichton resided in Mantua, he was encouraged by the reigning family to compose an Italian comedy, " wherein he exposed and ridiculed all the weaknesses and failures of the several employments that men betake themselves to, which was looked upon as

one of the most ingenious satires that ever was made upon mankind ; but that which was most wonderful and astonishing, was, that he himself personated the divine, philosopher, lawyer, mathematician, physician, and soldier, with such an inimitable grace, that every time he appeared upon the theatre, he seemed to be a different person." The name of this piece is not recorded ; it was probably a *comedia a soggetto*. For an account of the unhappy effect that the humour of this comedy had upon two maids of honour of the court, I must beg leave to refer the curious reader to Sir Thomas himself¹.

A minute and regular detail of the history of the stage of Mantua² does not fall within my plan ; but I shall embrace this occasion to observe, that it may be presumed the theatrical amusements of this court did not languish during the reign of Isabella d'Este, who, it would seem, inherited the passion of her father Ercole I. for

¹ Vid. *Traits of Sir T. Urquhart*, Edin. 1774, p. 75. The life of Crichton has been written, with his usual clearness and pleasing simplicity, by my deceased friend, Mr. Pennant. *Tour in Scot.* vol. i. App. No. iii. Having, in another place, bestowed a due meed of praise upon the tender interest which Vincenzo, Duke of Mantua, took in the sufferings of Tasso, (*Hist. Mem. on It. Trag.* p. 99) it is with pain I add, that he was the midnight assassin who plunged a sword into the heart of Crichton ! My authority is the testimony of concurring dates.

² It would be injustice to this stage to omit the following conjecture of Tiraboschi : " Il teatro di Vienna," says he, " fu il primo, a mio parere, fuori d'Italia, in cui s'introducesse il drama per musica ; ed io credo che la prima idea ne portasse seco da Mantua, l'arciduca Leopoldo." *Stor. della Poes. Ital.* Lond. 1803, ii. p. 466. The opera which suggested the idea to Leopold, was the *Europa* of Balduino di Monte Simoncelli, at the representation of which he was present in 1626.

the stage, from the circumstance of her extending her patronage to Galeotto del Carretto, and to G. G. Trifino, who respectively claim the honour of giving birth to Italian tragedy; and from her countenancing one of the first exhibitions of the "Calandra" of Bibbiena. Nor was the drama less favoured by her successors: indeed it appears to have been the peculiar care of Ferdinando Gonzaga; for he committed the management of his theatre to one of the most celebrated actors of his time, Gio. Battista Andreini, who was succeeded by Pietro Cotta, detto Celio, a player not less celebrated³. From the service of Ferdinando, Andreini passed into that of

Alessandro Pico of Mirandula⁴, in whose little state the dramatic muses found an early and a kind reception.

In the polished court of Urbino,—a court which indulged in all the luxury of wit, we cannot suppose the drama would be neglected. This court had its stage also at a very early period. When, and under whose direction, the first the-

³ While Cotta was in the service of this court, he published *Le Peripezie di Aleramo, e Adalasia, ovvero, la Discendenza degli eroi del Monferrato*, Bolog. 1697, a tragi-comedy in prose, written probably with a view to flatter or gratify his patron, to whom Monferrato was then subject. For some account of Cotta, vid. *Hist. Mem. on It. Trag.* p. 198.

⁴ In the dedication to his *Maddalena*, Mant 1617, to Pico, Andreini

says, "Quando per la mia felice fortuna, fui dal serenissimo Ferdinando Gonzaga, duca di Mantova, e mio signore, mandato a servire v. Eccell. un' anno sà co'l virtuoso trattenimento comico," &c. From another passage in this dedication, it would seem that the *Adamo* of this author was first introduced to the public notice by Pico,—perhaps it was first performed in the theatre of Mirandula.

atre opened in this state, was erected, I have not been able to discover ; but we learn from Serlio, that its scenic decorations were designed and executed by Girolamo Genga, a considerable portion of whose life was passed in the service of this court. Ignorant of the deceptive powers of painting, Genga's scenery consisted entirely of material objects : his trees, for instance, were formed of silk cut in imitation of nature ; and whatever else met the eye, wore a palpable form. Of the date of the first dramatic exhibition in this court I am ignorant ; but we find the " *Calandra*" was represented there so early as 1508. And the " *Aristippia*," which, according to Riccoboni, first appeared in 1523⁵, was also performed in this court. In the prologue to this drama, the author observes, that the comedies of his predecessors were written in so barbarous a jargon, as to be almost unintelligible, (alluding, we presume, to the intermixture of dialects) ; but adds, that the comic poets who had lately arisen, had adopted the language of common life ; and their productions could, therefore, not only be understood, but relished.

About the time that this comedy was represented at Urbino, Sebastiano Clarignano da Mon-

⁵ This, I am inclined to think, is a mistake. I have an edition of the *Aristippia*, which seems to be the first. Stampata in Roma nel mes: d' *Agosto* del M.D.XXIII.

tesaleo, was the most distinguished comedian in the service of that court. Giraldi Cinthio denominates him the Roscius of his time. And Riccoboni says that the dramatic poets of that period thought it an honour to be able to enumerate him with the performers by whom their pieces were enacted *.

Serlio speaks with pride of a wooden theatre, erected by himself, in the court of the Cà Porto of Vicenza. It was, he says, the largest in his time (1520⁷) in Italy. Before the hanging scene, (*la scena pendente*) he observes, there was a pulpitum, or stage, twelve feet in breadth, and sixty feet in length, on which interludes, triumphal cars, elephants, *moresca* or moorish shows, and spectacles of various kinds, were exhibited. From Serlio's contemporary, Bernardo Baldo, we learn, that, previous to the time of Palladio, the Italian theatres were temporary, and uniformly built of wood, with scenes constructed of the same material, and covered with linen or coarse cloth, painted according to the subject of the piece exhibited *.

As the "Afinaria" of Plautus, translated into terza rima, was recited in the monastery of S.

⁶ Tem. ii. p. 73. *Hist. Mem. on*
U. Trag. p. 84.

⁷ Serlio entered into the service of Francis I. of France about 1541.

* *Nostri hoc ævo ut temporaria*

theatra, ita scenas quoque faciunt lignæ nempe linteis tectas, picturis ex optice ductis affabre ad fabulæ modulum exornatas. Læm. Vitruv.

Stefano in Venice in 1514⁹, it may be presumed there was then no public theatre in that city; and that, therefore, the stage of this monastery was the choice of imperious necessity. This, at least, is the most charitable inference; for not only many situations in the "*Afinaria*," but several passages in the dialogue, are grossly indecent, and the conclusion remarkably immoral.

But Padua is supposed to have been in possession of a theatre long before the "*Afinaria*" was represented in Venice; perhaps that denominated the Obizzi was the first. It was erected by, and belonged to, the once powerful family of that name¹.

According to Giannone, there was no theatre in Naples previous to the descent of the emperor Charles V. into Italy, about which time, he adds, the Sieneſe not only ſuggeſted to the Neapolitans the idea of erecting a theatre, but ſupplied them

⁹ *Comedia Afinaria de Plauto traducta de latino in vulgare, representata adi xi. Feb. del 1514, in Venezia nel monasterio de S. Stefano*, in 4^o. senz'anno, luogo, e stampatore, ma probabilmente, says Zeno, in detto anno in Venezia. Riccoboni, speaking of this comedy, observes, "le tems de l'impression, et la singularité du lieu où on en a donné la représentation, méritent qu'on y fasse attention." I. p. 139.

¹ We find some of this family numbered with the dramatic poets of their country. *Dram.* p. 64, 151, 304. Of these the marquis Pio Enea

was the most distinguished. While he exercised his talents, he indulged his proud spirit in writing dramatic preludes to two splendid tournaments exhibited in Padua. With one of these pieces, intitled *Ermiona*, my kind and amiable friend, Mr. Todd, has enriched my collection. It is declared, in the title-page, to have been written, *per introduzione d'un Torneo à piedi, ed à cavallo, ed un Balletto rappresentato in musica* in Padua 1636. It is in fol. and embellished with good engravings. The names of the actors who filled the several characters are mentioned.

with actors, and furnished them with pieces for representation².

Of the theatrical exhibitions in Florence during the prevalence of the sacred drama, we have already given some account; and we have likewise mentioned the reform in the Italian stage meditated by Lorenzo de' Medici, detto il magnifico.

But the first of the Medici who seems to have promoted the modern drama with ardour, was Leo X. Under his auspices, the "Sofonisba" of Trissino was originally represented, with great splendour, in Rome; and it is asserted, that the second representation of the "Calandra" took place in his presence. Paulus Jovius informs us, that the "Mandragola" of Machiavelli was also exhibited before this pontiff³; and that in order to gratify his passion for theatrical amusements, he annually invited a company of Florentine actors, (the Rozzi) to perform his favourite pieces in the Vatican⁴. "During the splendid reign of

² *Ist. Civ. del reg. di Nap. Nap.* 1723, t. iv. p. 162.

³ Voltaire, by one of those happy strokes with which he strongly delineates the manners and the spirit of the times, offers an ingenious apology for the indulgence with which the comedies of Ariosto and Machiavelli were heard in the court of Leo. *Ess. sur l'Hist. Genl. ch. cvi.*

⁴ Amongst the actors in the service of Leo, Francesco Chereza held

the first rank. The excellence of his performance, in some of the principal characters in the comedies of Terence, obtained for him the cognomination of *Terenziano*. When Rome was besieged during the pontificate of Clement VII. he fled to Venice, where he continued, for many years, to exercise his profession with great applause. He is said to have first introduced, into that city, the art of reciting *Commedie a soggetto*. *Quadrie, V. p. 236.*

Leo X." says M. Tenhove, " public spectacles and theatrical amusements, so long forgotten or neglected, were revived with great pomp and lustre." The drama, thus favoured, made a rapid progress. It was now cultivated by some of the most celebrated writers of the day; and the influence of Leo's patronage was felt, and still continued to operate, long after his decease: Rome, during the reign of this munificent and enlightened pontiff, beheld her ancient theatre thrown open once more; and the language in which her orators, in the meridian of her glory, thundered from the rostra, was often heard, in all its original purity, on the papal stage, within the mouldering walls of that once glorious city. "*On croioit voir renaitre les beaux jours de l'empire Romain,*" says Voltaire, speaking of this period. In 1513, the 'Pænulus' of Plautus was represented, two successive days, in the private theatre of the pope's, on occasion of his brother, Guiliano de' Medici, being declared a citizen of Rome; and though, says Varillas, " the actors postures were too free, yet they gave no scandal." About the same time, and on another joyful occasion, the

^s This theatre, according to the abbé Barthelémy, was constructed in the square of the capitol; and he adds, that the music and scenery of the *Pænulus* excited general admiration. *Trav. in It. Lond. 1802, p. 400.* It would be gratifying to learn in what manner the character of Hannibal was managed on this occasion; for on his speaking the Punic language, and Milphio's attempting to explain it to his master, depend all the humour of one of the principal scenes of the comedy.

"Bacchidi" of the same poet, and the "Phormio" of Terence, were exhibited in the presence of his holiness. An occasional prologue to the latter was written by Muretus, and delivered by Ippolito da Este, the younger. The "Hippolytus" of Seneca was also represented at this time, on a temporary stage erected before the palace of the cardinal Raffaele San Giorgio, in which the character of Phædra was ably performed by Tommaso Inghirami, a celebrated professor of rhetoric, who ever after bore the name of *Phædrus**. A circumstance which occurred during this representation deserves to be recorded. The fall, and consequent damage, of a scene, happening to interrupt the performance, Tommaso advanced to the front of the stage, and addressed the audience in a rapid flow of extemporaneous Latin verses, which he continued, without intermission, till the scene was repaired. Of this extraordinary man the plan of this work seems to demand a biographical sketch.

* I shall here observe, that the writers who treat of the Italian drama, frequently mention the names of remarkable personages, who, like Inghirami, represented particular characters; but none of the ancient dramas present us with a list of the several actors in the piece. Nothing like a play-bill occurs in any Italian drama that has met my observation previous to the year 1598. But in that year, we find subjoined to *Intrecci d'Amore*, a comedy ascribed to

Tasso, "i nomi degli accademici di Caprarola, che rappresentarono la presente opera, ed Intermedii composti da G. A. Libesati." As it seems that all the characters in the piece were represented by men, it would be curious to know in what manner the stage-directions in regard to Venus, who delivers the prologue, were observed; for it is there desired, that she should appear *ignuda*,—naked!

Tommaso Inghirami was born of a noble family in Volterrano, about the year 1470. His father being killed in a popular tumult in 1472, he became an exile at the tender age of two years. Retiring with his uncle, Paolo, to Florence, he was kindly received and protected by Lorenzo de' Medici, detto il magnifico. His ardent passion for letters soon manifested itself; and, under the fostering care of his munificent patron, he made a rapid progress in his studies. Such was the versatility of his genius, he cultivated, with almost equal success, every branch of science, and every species of polite literature. In order to obtain a wider field for the display of his literary acquirements, he went to Rome, where his rhetorical powers soon attracted notice. In 1495, he was sent by the Roman court, in a diplomatic capacity, to the emperor Maximilian. Pleased with the success of his mission, the reigning pontiff, Alessandro VI. conferred upon him, on his return, some valuable benefices; and the emperor, whom he was equally fortunate in pleasing, created him Count Palatine, and granted him permission to bear the black eagle in his arms. Under succeeding popes, his talents continued to be employed, and his services to be amply remunerated. Julius II. appointed him librarian to the Vatican, and secretary for foreign correspondence. Nor was he

less favoured by Leo X. Decorated with the order of the Golden Spur, (*Spron d'oro*) enriched with canonries in the churches of S. Peter and S. John Laterano, the additional honour of a cardinal's hat was still intended for him; but he forfeited that dignity, by indulging in too licentious an use of one of the most dangerous gifts that nature can bestow,—sarcastic wit. A fall from a mule, in the year 1516, occasioned the death of this ingenious man, in the forty-sixth year of his age. Of his works, nothing remains but the concluding scenes of the “*Aulularia*” of Plautus, which had been left imperfect by the author, and which, says one of his biographers, he has completed in a manner that would almost deceive Plautus himself⁷.

The representations which we have just de-

⁷ *Elog. degli Uom. illust. Tose. t. ii. p. 233.* This supplement appeared, for the first time, in the edition of Plautus, printed in Paris, 1513. I have met with no edition of Plautus in which this supplement is either given or noticed; that published by Pareus, is, I believe, ascribed to Antonius Codrus Urceus. I had flattered myself with the hope of deriving some information on this subject from the MS. marginal observations of the famous Menage in a copy of Plautus in my possession; but I was disappointed.

Of the following pieces, the first is an imitation, the second a translation, of the *Aulularia*. *La Sporta*, Flor. 1550, (attributed to Machiavelli, but published under the name

of G. B. Gelli). *L'Aulularia*, Pisa, 1763, by Il Car. L. Guazzesi. It is hardly necessary to notice the obligations of Moliere and Fielding to the *Aulularia*, in their respective comedies of *L'Avare* and *The Miser*. Riccoboni, in a work which deserves to be better known, enumerates some Italian comedies played à l'improptu in Paris, from which Moliere drew several scenes in his *Avare*; and adds, those pieces “ont fourni à Moliere les lazzi, les plaisanteries, et même une partie du detail: si on ajoute ce qui est dans Plaute et dans Gelli, on ne trouvera pas dans toute la comédie de *L'Avare*, quatre scenes qui soient inventées par Moliere.” *Observ. sur la Comédie*, Par. 1736.

scribed, were succeeded by imitations of the ancient Latin poets, and original productions in that language. Francesco Benzi wrote, with his usual elegance, two dramas, intitled, "Ergastus" and "Philotimus," in which he introduced Fame, Honour, and several other allegorical personages. Bartolommeo Zamberti, Veneziano, produced the "Dolotechne." And Giovanni Armonio Marso, wrote "Stephanium," a comedy, in which, on its first representation, he exhibited the principal character himself. As the "Julius Cæsar" of Ant. Muretus fell from his pen during his residence in Rome, it is, on that account, claimed by the Italians, though the author was not a native of their country². But their claim is unquestionable to the tragedies of Giovanni Francesco Stos, a writer of this period, and to the "Protoponos" of Gianio Anifio, of the academy del Pontano of

² Marc-Antoine Muret, who ranks amongst the most celebrated Latin poets of France, was born near Limoges, A. D. 1526. He died in 1585. This self-taught scholar distinguished himself as a commentator on classic authors, a miscellaneous writer, and a Latin poet. He died in 1585, while filling the chair of professor of *belles lettres* at Rome. It is a curious circumstance in the history of typography, that the chair of Muret remained vacant two years, for the acceptance of the younger Aldus, who at length assumed it, and, at the same time, undertook the conduct of the Vatican press. *Renouard, Ann. de l'Imp. des Aldes, Par. 1803, t. ii. p. 120.*

Amongst other obligations which elegant literature has to this learned printer, is, as has been already observed, the publication of the *Philodemos* of Alberti. Mention of this circumstance leads me to remark, that the historians of the revival of letters seem in general to treat the family of the Mannucci (or, as they are vulgarly called, the Aldi) very ungenerously. If they condescend to mention them, it is merely as printers,—as humble artists; whereas they were indefatigable in drawing from obscurity many precious remains of the ancients, which they illustrated with learned comments, and to which they gave durability by their press.

Naples. The "Protogonos," though written several years before, did not appear till 1536.

But the most admired Latin dramas of this age, whose origin is referred to the silent operation of the remaining influence of Leo's munificent patronage of the *belles lettres*, and which may be said to reflect a degree of brilliancy on the wane of his 'golden days,' were the productions of Antonio Tilius of Cosenza, and his compatriot and friend, Coriolano Martirano, bishop of San Marco in Calabria. The "Imber Aureus" of the latter, which was frequently and magnificently represented at Nuremberg in 1530⁹, was particularly admired for the beauty and elegance of the style, and the strong and faithful picture of the passions which it exhibits. An analysis of this piece shall, therefore, be given.

IMBER AUREUS.

ÆT. I.

Acrisius, king of Argos, having consulted the oracle on the choice of a husband for his daughter, Danaë, is told that she will bear a son, who is fated to destroy him¹. On receiving this an-

⁹ "Magnificè, feliciterque frequentissimo in theatro," are the words of Cristofano Froschovoro.

¹ The story of Danaë is frequently alluded to by the Greek and Roman poets; but I believe this frail

swer, he immediately dismisses all her suitors, resolves to confine her in a tower, and recommends himself to the protection of Vulcan. While the chorus lament the fate of the princess, thus devoted to perpetual virginity, a crowd is seen pressing to the royal palace. Acrisius follows, and beholds a brazen tower instantly raised by Vulcan, in which Danaë and her nurse are immured.

Æ. II.

The chorus lament the fate of Danaë. She becomes impatient of her situation, and determines on suicide, from which she is dissuaded by her nurse. The dialogue, on this occasion, is animated with all the energy of passion. Danaë perceives the eagle of Jove, and augurs favourably from its appearance. She retires to pray to the thunderer.

Æ. III.

Grateful for the tower so opportunely raised by the power of Vulcan, Acrisius resolves to sacrifice an hecatomb in honour of that god, and orders a magnificent feast to be prepared, to re-

beauty is indebted to Tiresio for her first appearance upon any stage. I cannot learn that she was ever exhibited upon the English stage; nor do I discover her upon the stage of France earlier than 1707. Vid. Mr. Preston's learned and interesting *Not. et Obs.* on his excellent version of the *Argonautics* of *Ap. Rhodius*, *Dub.* 1803, p. 285, 286, 287, and *Recb. sur les Tr. de France*, t. ii. p. 489, t. iii. p. 305.

ward the Cyclops who assisted in the construction of the edifice. The distribution of rewards to the Cyclops, their drunkenness at the feast, and a scuffle that ensues between them and Polyphemus, who is at length killed, occupy the greater part of this act ².

Act. IV.

The following dialogue prepares the audience for the description of the shower of gold, which is supposed to penetrate the tower by a gradual distillation.

Danaë. Nutrix, age, mea nutrix,

Perii! *Nut.* Quid est? *Dan.* Quæ vidi!

Nut. Quid, mea, stupes? *Dan.* Heu! *Nut.* Fare.

Dan. Jam jam occidi. *Nut.* Miseram me!

Quid passa? *Dan.* Juppiter. *Nut.* Te,

Mea, sospitet; quid trepidas

Exterrita? quid horridula

Riget coma? quid hoc? cheu.

Dan. Hic ipse, Juppiter ipse—

Deliquit animus. O quæ

Spectare contigit.

Dan. O nurse, I am undone. *Nur.* What is it? *Dan.* Oh!

What have I seen? *Nur.* Why are you so amaz'd?

² In this scene the learned reader will immediately discover a decided imitation of the Greek satyr, and be reminded of the *Cyclops* of Euripides. Man is the creature of circumstance. Tilelio was a native of Magna Græcia, and passed his youth in the vicinity of the ancient Atella where the *Atellana fabule* were supposed to have originated. Is it then to be wondered at, however it may be regretted, that he should mar the beauty of his tragedy by the introduction of satyric persons?

Dan. Alas ! *Nur.* For pity's sake declare

The cause. *Dan.* My fate's fulfill'd. *Nur.* Alas, by whom ?

Dan. O Jove ! *Nur.* May he, my child, protect you still.

Why tremble so ? Why stands your hair erect ?

Tell the sad cause, oh tell it. *Dan.* Jove himself

Was my destruction. Oh ! I faint, I die.

A cloud of roseate hue is described as rising from the sea. Assuming the form of a bird, it approaches the tower, and, resting on the top, it gradually melts, and, in that liquid state, passes through the windows. The following passage is finely descriptive, but contains, perhaps, a little
' *more than meets the ear.*'

Crebrescit Imber diffuens mæx Aureus
Illapsus undique, penetranſque, qua domus
Junctura, qua diem inferunt ſpiracula.
Mentis mæxi quid fuerit ſibi tum, cogita,
Concreta cum pars, grando ut aurca, crepitans,
Circumque reſtliens petoret ultro ſinum.
Obrigui, ac ipſo auro magis tuac pallui.
Sed ubi animum tandem recepi perditum,
Munus rata deum, ſubſidi explicans ſinus,
Aurumque colludens, micanſque ſedula,
Flavis, ſonanſque rivulis fluentibus
Ignara ſponte condidi in gremium mæxi,
Legens ubique quod jacebat protinus:

³ Titian, who ſeems to have delighted in ſuch ſubjects, took a liberty with Danaë that would not be allowed on the ſtage; he repreſented her "ignuda," ſays Vaſari, with a Jove "in grembo transformato in poggio d'oro." T. vii. p.

18. This famous picture, when viſited by Michelagnuolo, gave birth to a very intereſſing converſation, which is minutely related by the garrulous Vaſari, the Herodotus of his art. The character of this writer (to whom the preſent work has

Soon in redundant streams a golden shower,
 Thro' every chink thro' which the day-beam flows,
 Came with impetuous fury pouring down.
 O then imagine my dismay, to see
 How some, in shining orbs conglob'd like hail,
 Came with sonorous fall, and quick rebound,
 And often, with spontaneous impulse, seem'd
 To seek my lap and bosom! Sudden fear
 Congeal'd the vital source, and long I stood
 Far paler than the magic metals here.
 But when my senses rally'd, I return'd
 Thanks for the god's inestimable boon,
 And try'd, with busy hand and spreading lap,
 To catch the golden grains, or stoop'd to seize
 The fluid wealth that wanton'd o'er the floor
 In many a glittering rill.

¶

With equal felicity of expression is described the transformation of the cloud into a youth, who proves to be Jove. He unfolds to Danaë her future fate. The chorus take occasion to expatiate on the power of the god of love, and entreat him to be propitious to the human race.

Act. V.

At the opening of this act, it is related, that Acrisius, having observed the head of a man at

many obligations) has been ably drawn by Mr. Fusell, in a note on his admirable *Lectures on Painting*, Lond. 1802, p. 119. He has also received justice at the hands of Mr. Roscoe. *Life of Lorenzo de' Medici*, v. ii. p. 180, note (b) 2d ed.

the window of the tower, forces the door; but having fought in vain for the person whom he expected to find, he rushes, in a rage, on his daughter, and threatens her with instant death. Then suddenly changing his mind, he orders her to be inclosed in the trunk of a pine, and flung into the sea. The chorus inveigh against Acrisius, and implore Amphitrite to save the unhappy princess. The following address to Melpomene concludes the piece.

Jovis, o Melpomene, decus,
Rosco vineta cothurno,
Lyra cordi cui lugubris,
Delatum hoc tibi munus
Faxis perpetuum, rogo.

Queen of sorrow! pride of Jove!
By thy purple buskins known;
Not the tinkling lute of love,
But the lyre of rueful tone,
Pleases thee! O! then be kind,
And a deathless verse bestow,
On the honour'd dust resign'd
To this tenement of woe.

*

Antonio Tiesio was born in Cosenza, about the year 1470. Having finished his studies, he went to Milan, where he was appointed professor of eloquence; a situation for which he seems to have been highly qualified. In 1518, he pro-

nounced a funeral oration on the famous general, Gianjacopo Trivulzi, which was printed in the following year. While he resided in Milan, he formed an acquaintance with Bandello, who prevailed on him to recite, in the presence of Camilla Scarampa, his inedited poem on the "*Pomo Granato*," which was, says the novelist, much applauded ⁴. From Milan he passed to Rome, where he soon obtained a professorship in the Collegio della Sapienza. Here he published (1524) his Latin poems, in which he treats, with a playfulness equally graceful and elegant, some trifling subjects, such as the girdle to which the purse of the cardinals is suspended, and the lamp by the light of which he studied at night. Fearing, says Jovius, to risk his reputation by failing in any great or serious work, he chose subjects of the lighter kind for the exercise of his poetic powers. His ambition seems to have been mo-

⁴ This circumstance is mentioned in the poem to *Nov. 13. Part iv.* which is addressed to F. Peto Fondano. "Quello giorno," says Bandello, "che voi a la presenza de la nuova Saffo, la Signora Camilla Scarampa e Guidobuona, in casa recitaste l'arguto vostro epigramma fatto in lode de le maniglie de la incomparabile eroina, la Signora Ippolita Sforza e Bentivoglia, il nostro m. A. Tiesio molto quello commendò. Onde io per l'amicizia che seco ho, lo pregai che anco egli volesse alcuno de li suoi poemmi recitare. Egli, che è gentilissimo, non sostenne esserc troppo pregato, ma con

quella soavissima sua prononzia recitò il suo *Pomo punico*, o vero come volgarmente si dice, *Granato*; di modo che il vostro e suo poema mirabilmente a tutti piacque." For the insertion of this interesting passage, I shall offer no apology; but I shall beg leave to observe, that this "*nuova Saffo*" is often mentioned by Bandello, and the epithet "*dotta*" bestowed on her in the little preface to *Nov. 23. Part iii.* in which is given a citation from one of her sonnets, containing this just observation, that "*di buon core non ama, chi non teme.*"

deftly confined to a wifh of being numbered with the ‘ *gentlemen who write with eafe.*’ This appears from the little volume under confideration. However, his “ *Imber Aureus*,” with all its faults, exalts him to an elevated rank in the republic of letters. While his Latin poems were extending his literary fame, the eloquence which he difplayed in the public lectures that he delivered in the Collegio della Sapienza, procured him the patronage of Cardinal Egidio ⁵ da Viterbo, and of G. M. Giberti, bifhop of Verona, the latter of whom conferred on him a rich benefice. It is fupposed that Tilefio was in Rome when it was befieged by Cardinal Colonna; but Jovius feems to innuendate that he fled at the approach of the army,—*effugit cladem urbis* ⁶, fays he. That he quit Rome about this time, is, however, certain; for we foon after find him in Venice, where he was employed to direct, or fuperintend, the education of the youth deftined to the Ducal Cancellaria. From Venice he made an excurfion to his native Cofenza, with intention, as

⁵ Is patronizing Tilefio, Egidio evinced great liberality of mind; for he purfued the fame road to fame which Tilefio had taken. He was a Latin poet and an orator. *Critic. tom. iv. p. 14. Jovii, Elog. lxxv.* Of Giberti, to whom Tilefio was indebted for folid favours, a pleasing account is given by Mr. Grefwell. *Mem. of Aug. Pol. p. 178.*

He was not only a munificent patron of literature, but a diftinguifhed literary character himfelf. He is the fubject of Bembo’s fine poem of *Benatus*.

Tc, Giberte, cano, &c.

⁶ *Elog. cxlii.*

he declared, to return. But the delights of home induced him not only to change his purpose in regard to returning to Venice, but determined him to refuse several pressing invitations to Milan and Ragusa. At Cosenza he continued to enjoy the society of the friends of his youth, and to repose in the bosom of his family till 1533, when he died. In 1762, his works were collected and published in Naples, with his life, by Don Francesco Danicle.

Martirano translated, or rather imitated, freely, the following ancient dramas. The "Medea," "Hippolytus," "Bacchanalians," "Cyclops," and "Phœnician Damsels," of Euripides; the "Prometheus" of Eschylus; the "Electra" of Sophocles; and the "Clouds" and "Plutus" of Aristophanes. Martirano's deviations from his originals were made with an hand equally bold and judicious. In the "Hippolytus," he has considerably improved the description of the fatal encounter of Hippolytus with the sea-monster, making the unfortunate youth solely attentive to the management of his affrighted steeds.

*In arte suctus illa habenas colligit :
Cæditque loris terga cornipedum, regens
Flectensque currum, navita hibernis velut
Puppm procellis. Ore sed prensis equi
Frænis rebelli vi feruntur, nec manu
Parent herili.*

In rufal accents, fharpener by the pangs
 That parted foul and body. " Power fupreme,
 Over all nature paramount," he cry'd,
 " Why doft thou now forfake thine own?" The word
 Had fcarce forfaken his pale quivering lips,
 When life feem'd on the wing to go. Again,
 After fome pause, he cry'd, " O Father! free
 Thy fon, thy fervant from thofe direful pains,
 And loofe the bond of life." Down funk his head
 At the laft word, and o'er his raylefs eyes
 The film of death its ghafly curtain drew.
 But now even dead things feem'd to live, and loud
 All nature feem'd to clamour at his fate;
 With noifes long and horrible; below
 Her deep foundations reel'd, and hills to hills
 Stoop'd their dark brows tremendous o'er the vales,
 Menacing hideous fall. The parting cliffs
 Yawn'd horrible on the diurnal lamp,
 Whofe fplendours ficken'd to a difmal gloom,
 As if the froze gorgonean hand of death
 Had feized its waning glories; o'er the world
 Unufual darknefs fpread her dragon plumes.



This drama has obtained for the author the honourable appellation of the *Chriftian Sophocles*.

Martirano died about 1557. His poetical works were printed the preceding year in Naples. Of this learned and ingenious man, who does fo much honour to Italy, little more feems to be known, than that he had been bifhop of San Marco in Calabria, and one of the fecretaries to the council of Trent.

While Martirano was thus employed in the wilds of Calabria, Machiavelli, whose "amazing reach of thought has penetrated into the most secret recesses of government, and untwisted the most entangled web of politics," occasionally relaxed his gigantic mind, amidst the pressing cares of the Florentine republic, in imitating and translating the Greek and Roman comic poets. "He is a tiger," says M. Tenhove, "with all the playfulness of a cat." His admirable comedy of "Clitia" is a free imitation of the "Casina" of Plautus. And an excellent version of the "Andria" of Terence, by this great man, has

19 When the author makes Cleandro say, "Quando, dodici anni sono, nel 1494, passò il re Carlo, &c. he determines, or, at least, insinuates the year (1506) in which the *Clitia* was written. However, Alacci was not able to discover an earlier edition than that of Ven. 1537, in 8vo. As this comedy is accompanied with six canzonette, Sig. Signorelli thinks it should be numbered with the "opere musicali" of the sixteenth century. The first canzone is sung before the prologue by a nymph and two shepherds. I shall transcribe the madrigal which follows the last act.

Voi che si intente e quiete,
Anime belle, esempio honesto,
humile,
Maestro, saggio, e gentile,
Di nostra humana vita udito ha-
vete,
Et pur lui conoscete
Qual cosa schifar diefi, e qual se-
guire,

Par salir dritti al cielo,
Et sotto rado velo
Più olera assai, e' hor fora lunga à
dire;
Di cui preghiamo tal frutto appo
voi sia,
Qual merta tanta vostra cortesia.
Op. di N. Machiavelli, 1550.

Luigi Groto, the celebrated *Cicero d'Adria*, in a very sensible letter to Giovanni Fratta, admits the propriety of occasionally filling up the intervals between the acts with music, or mute spectacles; but objects to the use of dramatic interludes; because, says he, "non è ben fatto il tornare à confonderlo con un'altra Favola nova, e con la seconda intricar la prima, e con la prima la seconda: onde il popolo non habbia mai spatio di respirare, e non intenda ne l'una ne l'altra cosa." *Leti. famig. di L. Groto, Ven. 1616.* This seems to have been the opinion of Machiavelli.

been lately rescued from obscurity¹. But his "Maschere," which is said to be an imitation of the "Clouds" of Aristophanes, still remains inedited². A comedy, intitled "La Sporta," the plot of which is borrowed from the "Aulularia" of Plautus, has been ascribed to Machiavelli. This piece, it is supposed, he left, in an imperfect state, in the hands of his friend, Bernardino di Giordano of Florence, (in whose house his comedies were sometimes represented) whence it passed into the possession of Giambatista Gelli, (a writer of great learning and infinite humour³) who prepared it for the press, and published it as his own production, at Florence, in 1543⁴.

¹ This translation appeared for the first time, in an edition of the *Opere* of Machiavelli, printed at Paris (with the date of London) in 1768. The appearance of this translation would seem to afford a complete refutation of the assertion of Jovius and other writers, that Machiavelli did not understand the Latin language. But though Shakespeare translated from Ovid, borrowed from Plautus, drew the subjects of some of his plays from Italian novels, and wrote whole scenes in French, yet it is still affirmed, that he was totally ignorant of the Latin, Italian, and French, languages! *Credat Jove laus Apella,*

Non ego.

Nor do I yield more faith to the assertion of Jovius in regard to the learning of Machiavelli.

² *Elog. degli Uom. illust. Toscani*, tom. iii. p. 94.

³ See his life by Mr. Layng, prefixed to his translation of *La Circe*, Lond. 1745. Mr. Layng, with the partial fondness of a biographer, conceals the meanness of Gelli's origin, and omits to tell that he was bred a shoemaker.

⁴ The base practice of adorning the brow with stolen laurels prevailed at different periods in Italy. But perhaps one of the most impudent attempts at literary imposition on record, is that of Jacopo Bononeti, who, in 1601, published at Vicenza three comedies of Aretino, with new titles, under the name of Luigi Tanfillo. In a subsequent edition of one of those pieces, *Il Saffista*, Vic. 1610, (the *Filosofo* of Aretino) he says, in his dedication, "la presente Comedia fatta poco prima del suo morire dal bellissimo ingegno del Signor Luigi Tanfillo." *La Cortigiana*, however, of the *flagello de' principi*, escaped the pirate of Vicenza, who probably feared that its cele-

After the return of the Medici from exile⁵, the drama flourished again under the auspices of that illustrious family. On the accession of the unfortunate Alessandro to the government of Florence, he employed Gio, Maria Primerani, a poet then in prison, to write a tragi-comedy on the scandalous adventure of Tamar, the daughter of David⁶. This indecent piece was performed before the duke and his sister, by the company of the fanciulli della Purificazione, on a stage prepared under the direction of Bastiano detto Aristotile, with scenery,—*la più bella*, says Vasari, *che fusse stata fatta giammai*,—painted by that artist. The pleasure which this representation afforded the duke, induced him to liberate the author, on condition that he would write another drama; a condition to which, it may be presumed, the poet readily

brity would lead to immediate detection. For this drama, Francis I. of France presented Aretino with a collar of gold, worth six hundred crowns. This collar, says Mazzuchelli, was formed of "lingue smaltate di vermiglio," with the following equivocal motto: "*Lingua ejus loquetur mendacium*."

⁵ It is supposed by Vasari, (*tom. iii. p. 77*) that Piero di Cosimo's celebrated pageant of *Il Carro della Morte*, alluded, prophetically, to the return of the Medici from exile, particularly that passage in the canzone which was sung during the procession, beginning,

Morte siam, come vedete, &c.

Vid. *Append. No. IX.*

⁶ An *Azione tragica*, by Giambattista de Velo, (*Vicenna, 1586*) on this subject, is said to be the first prose tragedy in the Italian language. As this drama has eluded my researches, I am ignorant of the manner in which the subject has been treated by Velo. But, as M. Tenhove justly observes, "with whatever degree of prudence a poet attempts to treat an indecent subject, it is impossible he should be able to avoid indelicate situations, which will affect the whole." *Vol. ii. p. 487*. That Milton thought the story of Tamar a good subject for the tragic muse, appears from the Appendix to *Samson Agonistes*, in the revd. Mr. Todd's valuable edition of his *Poetical Works*, vol. iv. p. 502.

assented. Either at the suggestion of the duke, or with a view to the gratification of that prince's propensity to illicit pleasures, Primerani selected another amorous story for his subject, making Potiphar's wife the heroine of his piece. This drama, which was intitled "Gioseffo⁷," was exhibited in a theatre erected by Aristotile, in the garden of Alessandro, the scenery of which is described as having consisted of columns, tabernacles, statues, and *molt' altre cose capricciose*. On the marriage of Alessandro with Margaret of Austria, this artist was again employed to construct another theatre, near the palace of Ottaviano de' Medici, in the via di Sangallo, for the representation of the "Aridosio," an admirable comedy, by Lorenzino de' Medici⁸." Lorenzino, under whose direction the theatre was chiefly erected, having previously determined to avail himself of this occasion to execute his diabolical

⁷ As neither this piece, nor the *Tamar* of Primerani, were printed, they can only be known to us by the report of contemporary writers. M. Tenhove supposes that the fable of the *Gioseffo* was drawn immediately from Holy Writ. Incidents, however, might have been borrowed from the *Koran*, or from some of the several Persian poems and romances, founded upon this interesting story, (vid. *Perf. Miscell. Lond.* 1795, ch. vii.) as "a prodigious literary traffic" was carried on between Italy and the East in the time of Primerani. The full title of the drama in question, as given by M.

Tenhove, runs thus: *The Innocence of Joseph saved from the snares, and afterwards from the calumnies, of Potiphar's wife*. And he adds the following words: "n'ayant pû recouvrer le drame Italien, j'ignore si l'auteur à tenté de pallier le vice de son sujet."

⁸ The first edition of this comedy appeared in *Lucca, per Vinc. Busdragio*, 1548, in 8vo. It has been repeatedly reprinted since in Bologna, Venice, and Florence. M. Tenhove ascribes to Lorenzino a tragedy, concerning which some conjectures may be found in the *Append. No. XII.*

design upon the life of Alessandro, endeavoured to prevail on the architect to allow a certain part of the structure to be so feebly supported, that, had his instructions been followed, it must inevitably have fallen in the course of the representation, and have crushed the duke, with a considerable number of the audience, to death. But the incorruptibility, or, perhaps, humanity, of Aristotile, or, it might be, a threat of discovery by Giorgio Vasari, (who overheard a conversation on the subject between the artist and the author) defeated this nefarious scheme⁹.

Here let us pause a moment to notice, briefly, a comedy, which had been so nearly fatal in representation. The "Aridosio," though now neglected, or little known, is rich in genuine comic humour. The characters are delightfully varied, and drawn and supported with great truth and ability. The plot is complicated: it is broken into three actions, all of which, however, are made to assist mutually in producing, or hastening, the catastrophe. The incident upon which

⁹ Several interesting notices of Lorenzino are given in M. Tenhove's *Mem. of the House of Medici, passim*. I shall select one as peculiarly illustrative of the character of the man. While the dead body of the unfortunate Alessandro lay on the bed where the assassins had thrown it, Lorenzino dipped his hand in the blood of the slaughtered victim, and wrote with it on the

wall the following line from Virgil.

Vincet amor patriæ, laudumque immensa cupido.

Admiring, as I do, the splendid talents of Count Alfieri, it grieves me to find him not only the apologist, but the eulogist, of this modern Brutus, in his *Etruria vindicata*. Vid. his *Oper. var. tom. iii.*

ft. 2, *Att.* iii. turns, is highly comic, and, I believe, original.

In the year 1536, the talents of Aristotile were again exercised in the service of the drama. On the marriage of Cosmo I. with Eleonora di Toledo, this artist, says Vasari, erected in the large court before the palace of the Medici, (*il palazzetto vecchio*) on the spot where the fountain now stands, another theatre, representing the city of Pisa, with all its gates, streets, and palaces, of every description, including the leaning tower, and the circular temple of S. Giovanni². Vasari speaks with admiration of the construction of the stairs; and adds, that in a lantern suspended at the end of the stage, hung a crystal ball filled with distilled water, (*acqua stillata*) behind which were placed burning torches, that shed a general light over the whole stage, and gave to the ball the semblance of a sun³. This solar appearance was

² Another comedy, of which the scene is also laid in Pisa, was represented before Cosmo. This was *La Gioia* of G. da Pistoia, who, after he had retired from the chief magistracy of Florence, amused his old age in writing comedies. The stage-directions require, that the scene be disposed "in maniera che scuopra il Campanile del duomo che pende." *Ven.* 1586.

³ It appears from Giambullari's description of the splendid fête of which this comedy constituted a part, that the sun was preceded by his accustomed harbinger. The

guests, says he, "sedendo ciascun, et vaggheggiando la prospettiva, si vede à poco à poco dalla parte di Levante, apparire nel cielo della scena, una Aurora; la quale sopra à rosso et fiorito drappo, vestiva di fortissima tocca d'oro, e d'argento à liste, molto lucida e trasparente: et haveva le ali bianche e vermiglie con infinita varietà di colori. I suoi calzaretti erano di fiori maestrevolmente composti: et ella con un pettine d'avorio in mano, pettinando i suoi lunghi capelli d'oro, cantava queste parole.

Vattene

probably devised by the poet whose piece was represented; for as it seemed to rise at the opening of the play, and gradually sink down with the closing scene, it served to indicate, that the plot was comprised within the limits of a natural day, and that, of course, the time had been regulated by the infallible clock of Aristotle. The piece in question was the "Commodo" of Antonio Landi³, a Florentine gentleman. The music and interludes were performed under the direction of Gio. Batista Striozzi, by whom the latter were invented and composed.

A few years previous to this splendid exhibition, the "Mandragola" and "Clizia" of Machiavelli were represented in the house of Bernardino di Giordano, in Florence, by the compagnia della Cazzuola, with scenery painted and designed by the celebrated Andrea del Sarto,

Vattene Almo riposo, ecco ch' io
torno

Et ne rimeno il giorno,

Levate herbetto e fronde

Et vestitevi piaggie et arbustelli:

Uscite, o pastorelli,

Uscite o nymfe bionde

Fuor del bel nido addorno,

Ogn' un' si fuggi e muova al mio ritorno.

Era il suo canto accompagnato da un grave cembolo à duoi registri, sotto vi organo, flauto, arpe, et voci di uccelli, et con un violone che con incredibil dolcezza dilettava gli orecchi et gli animi di chi l'udiva. Dopo le spalle della Aurora, si vede à po-

co à poco sorgere un sole nel cielo. &c. P. 65-66.

³ *Impressa in Fior. per Bened. Giunta nell' anno MDXXXIX. di XXXIX d' Agosto.* This edition is accompanied with the *Apparato et Feste, le sue stanze, madriali, intermedij, &c.* In the prologue, the following slight sketch of the argument is given: "Demetrio, che prima comparirà in scena, mandato di Palermo da Rinaldo Palmerini in Pisa, et addirittura in casa Lamberto Lanfranchi, cittadino Pisano, si innamora di Porfiria sua sorella; ne che ella sua sorella sia, e Leandro suo fratello è consapevole; il quale Leandro vedrete anchora poi innamorato della figliuola d'un dottore, &c.

and by Bastiano detto Aristotile ⁴, whom we have so often had occasion to mention and commend. Ippolito, and the unfortunate Alessandro de' Medici, were present at this representation. As we are now about to take our leave of the comedies of the Florentine secretary, we shall embrace this occasion to correct an error into which Varillas seems to have fallen, in regard to the origin of the "Clizia."—"One day," says he, "that Machiavelli counterfeited the gestures and irregular deportments of some of the Florentines, the Cardinal de' Medici (afterwards Leo X.) told him they would appear very ridiculous upon the stage, in a comedy made in imitation of that of Aristophanes. There needed no more to set Machiavelli to work upon "Clizia," wherein the parties he meant to ridicule, are drawn so to the life, that they durst not be angry, though they assisted at the first representation of the piece, for fear of augmenting the public laughter, by betraying themselves ⁵." Now, as it is well known that in the "Mandragola," which was written in express imitation of Aristophanes, several living characters were brought to the 'dra-

⁴ Vasari, tom. v. p. 283.

⁵ Secret Hist. of the House of Med. Lond. 1686, p. 361. Varillas was probably led into this error by Hip. Orio, the Italian translator of Jovius, who, in translating his author's account of *Messer Nicia*, erroneously

calls that piece the *Clizia*. *If. del Museo del Govio, Fir. 1552*. This error of Orio must have been occasioned by his not having read the *Mandragola*, in which *Nicia* is the principal character.

matic balbert," it may be presumed that the origin to which Varillas refers the "*Clizia*," should be assigned to that admirable comedy. The "*Clizia*," as we have elsewhere observed, is an imitation of the "*Casina*" of Plautus. The anecdote which we have just related, exhibits the grave, deep, and artful, secretary of the Florentine republic in a new character,—he drops the politician's mask, and appears a mimic.⁶

X. RICCOBONI says, the academy of Sienna was the first that, by its own example, encouraged other learned societies to compose and represent correct or regular comedies. Till that time, he continues, hired players had always acted extempore, and never performed a piece that had not been previously printed. The academy to which this writer alludes, was denominated *Degl' Intronati*, the rise and progress of which we shall now attempt to trace. And as the *Rozzi* were also concerned in producing this happy reform in the Italian stage, we shall be-

⁶ Zacchioli's concise and energetic character of Machiavelli merits transcription: "Nicolas Machiavelli, surnommé le secrétaire florentin, il donna des leçons aux guerriers, et fit la satire des tyrans. L'on doit croire qu'il ne méritait pas l'acharnement, avec lequel on a taché de flétrir sa mémoire." *Deſc. de la Gal.*

de Flor. 1790, p. 125. When Count Alfieri says, that Machiavelli "*viveva negletto*" under the Medici, (*Op. var. t. i. p. 500*) he seems to violate historic truth. It was only when he ceased to deserve, that he ceased to experience, the protection of that illustrious family.

flow an equal share of attention upon that useful institution.

While Æneas Silvius Piccolomini, who rose, in 1458⁷, to the chair of St. Peter, under the name of Pius II. was bishop of Sienna, there were held, in that city, under his auspices, stated literary meetings, which gradually formed themselves into an academy, about the year 1450⁸. This celebrated academy, which owes its birth to Archbishop Bandini and Antonio Vignalli, and which is considered as one of the most ancient in Italy, assumed the whimsical denomination, "DEGL' INTRONATI⁹," or, "THE BLOCK-HEADS;" and took for its emblem a cut pumpkin, with a hole like that in which the French peasants

⁷ *Hist. des Papes*, tom. ii. p. 159.

⁸ Although Æneas is not numbered with the dramatists of his country, it would seem from the following relation, that he had, at least, an early predilection for the prevailing drama of his time; and that, therefore, it may be presumed he had the principal object of this institution at heart. Mr. Malone, after expatiating on the ancient mysteries, proceeds, "I may add, that these representations were so far from being considered as indecent or profane, that even a supreme pontiff, Pius II. about the year 1416, composed, and caused to be acted before him, on Corpus Christi day, a Mystery, in which was represented the Court of the King of Heaven." *Hist. acc. of the Eng. Stag.* p. 131. *Shasp. ed.* 1793. *Histromastrix*, 1633, p. 112. There is probably an error in regard to the date in the

foregoing account, (an error for which the author of *Histromastrix* is alone accountable); for in 1416, Æneas was only eleven years of age,—an age at which a mystery might be enjoyed, but could hardly be written. It is, however, merely in the date that the error may be presumed to lie; for as Æneas was not only a poet, but a chief promoter of the academy of the *Intronati*, it is not unlikely that the mystery in question was composed by him in his youth, and acted in his presence, either during his pontificate, or while he was metropolitan of Sienna,—a city in which the drama was early and peculiarly favoured by his family.

⁹ "Intronato," says De La Lande, "est un vase fêlé, qui lorsqu'on le frappe annonce à l'oreille qu'il est cassé."

keep dry salt; and for the device of its seal, a pestle, with this motto from Ovid, *meliora latent*. To each member was assigned a name, which was to serve as an hint towards the correction of some prevailing fault; such as *Il Trasturato*, the arrogant, *Il Giarlone*, the babbler, &c. An Arci-Intronato, or Chief Blockhead, was annually elected to fill the office of president. And at a stated time in each year, or on any remarkable occasion, a meeting was convened, where sonnets and canzoni were recited, and plays exhibited, in a theatre appertaining to the academy. When the republic of Sienna, liberated from the Spanish yoke, passed into the hands of the Medici family, the functions of this academy ceased for a while; but in 1603, all its privileges were restored by Ferdinand I. grand duke of Florence. And, in 1670, on its being incorporated with the

¹ De la Lande observes, that on this theatre becoming the joint property of the two academies, "on rebâtît les loges avec plus de magnificence qu'auparavant, et l'on y joua *l'Argia*." *Tom. iii. p. 297*. The piece exhibited on this occasion was, probably, *l'Argia*, *dramma musicale rappresentato a Insprugg. Alla Maschia della sereniss. Cristina regina di Svezia, &c. Inspr. 1655*. Concerning this drama, there is the following curious anecdote among the MSS. of Dr. Bargrave, in the library of the cathedral of Canterbury, which, whether my conjecture be well founded or not, is worth transcribing. He is describing a festino given to Christina while she was at Inspruck: "That night she was entertained with a most

excellent opera, all in musick, and in Italian; the actors of that play being all of that nation, and as some of themselves told me they were 7 castrati or eunuchs; the rest were whoores, monks, fryers, and priests: I am sure it lasted about 6 or 7 houres, with most strangely excellent scenes, and ravishing musick; of all which by the archduke's order the Sig. Conte Collacio presented me with a booke in Italian, w^{ch} I have now in my study, with all the scenes in excellent brass cutts." Vid. rev. Mr. Todd's ed. of *Poet. Works of J. Milton*, *Lond. 1801*, (*vol. vi. p. 269*); a work not less rich in curious and interesting literary anecdote, than in sound and ingenious criticism.

Filomati, it obtained possession of the theatre erected in the hall where the council of Sienna formerly assembled, and in which the comedy of "L'Ortenzio" had been represented (1560) before Cosmo I.¹ This theatre was destroyed by fire in 1751². But the academy continued to flourish until the fatal incursion of the desolating armies of the French republic³.

Possessed of three dramas represented in this academy, I am enabled to lay before my readers some account of the manner in which those exhibitions were conducted. The first of these pieces is intitled, "Comedià del Sacrificio degli Intronati, celebrato nei Giochi d'un carnovale in Sienna"⁴. This was the carnival of 1531,

¹ This theatre has been since rebuilt, chiefly at the expence of the emperor. The construction of the new edifice is thus described by De la Lande. "Ce nouveau théâtre est très-commode; sa forme est un ovale parfait, dont une extrémité est interrompue par l'orchestre. Il y a quatre rangs de vingt-une loges chacun, en y comprenant celle du milieu qui tient la place de trois. Mais les peintures qui décorent les loges, ne répondent point de tout à la beauté de la salle." *T. iii. p. 297.*

² When M. Landi observes, that this academy was in existence so late as 1771, he makes honourable mention of one of its female associates. "Parmi les Intronati, l'académicienne Marie Fortuna, dame Siennoise, fit en 1771, et dédia au roi de Prusse une tragédie intitulée *Zaffra*, pièce que les meilleurs poëtes ne désavoueroient point." *Hist. de la Litt. de*

l'Ital. v. p. 280. The admission of ladies into this academy, was contrary to an express decree of Apollo, according to Boccacini, who assigns an humorous reason for their exclusion. *Ragg. di Parmess. cent. i. ragg. 22.*

⁴ This edition which was, I believe, the first, was printed in M.D.XXXVIII. There is no note of place, but Sienna may be presumed. This comedy is so old that Scipione Bargagli asserts, "che essa fu la prima per avventura, o delle poche prime, che con buona arte e bella grazia di stile, e di rappresentazione al popolo vedate fossero in Italia a que' tempi." The author is unknown.

This comedy was translated into French by Charles Estienne, and printed, with the title of *Les Abuses*, at Lyons, 1543. A corrected edition, with engravings, appeared at Paris, 1556.

when the office of Arci-Intronato was filled by a member denominated *Il Sordo*.

THE prelude is opened by a musician, who enters, singing to a lyre, in ottava rima, an address to the ladies, in which he complains of their cruelty, and informs them, that such of their lovers as they had treated with unmerited severity, were each, that evening, to burn, upon an altar prepared for the purpose, the most precious memento of their affection.

Ciò che di voi più caro tiene:
Di vostr' amor, di vostra fede pegno.

A dialogue ensues, in which a madrigal, beginning

Alma celeste Dea,

is sung. The attending priest then prefers a prayer to all the gods in regular succession, commencing with the

Omnipotente almo rettor, &c.

After this prayer, he addresses the *Ingannati*, (the deceived, or injured lovers) assembled around him.

Queste belle spietate et fiere Donne
Rende loro à se stessi, et via discaccia
Da i petti lor l' indegna ingiusta fiamma, &c.

The first *Ingannato*, who is called *Il Defiato*, ascending by three steps to the altar, flings a veil, bathed in tears, into the flames, and while it burns, he repeats the following lines.

Delle lagrime mie fido sostegno
 Candido velo al sacro altar ti porto,
 Poi che mia colpa nò mà l' altrui torto
 Di pregio, o dono alcun non mi fe degno.
 Portan quest' altri amanti un charo pegno,
 Io Defiato sol senza conforto
 De la doglia infinita in cui già morto
 Piangendo sono ho te per certo segno.
 Tu quell' humor che da i trist' occhi hai tolto
 Allhor ch' al fuoco andrai non sparger fuore,
 Se del mio lungo affanno homai ti cale,
 Ch' alle fiamme farebbe il valor tolto
 De la molta acqua ; et perciò i miei dolori
 Rimedio non haurien nel mio gran male.

Go faithful guardjan of the falling tear,
 Bright veil ! I fling thee to the sacred flame,
 Not for my own,—but for another's shame,
 Condemn'd a poor, unequal gift to bear;
 Richer oblations may be offer'd here
 By wealthier hands ; but my devoted name
 Thus the sole pledge of countless woes may claim,
 Which soon this body to a shade must wear.
 O bear my treasure to the sacred fire,
 But scatter none, if, with your master's care,
 This unpolluted gift can sympathize.
 An half-extinguish'd flame can ne'er aspire :
 Nor any solace for my deep despair,
 Be left for me, beneath the ample skies.

He then descends, and is succeeded by l'Astanofo, bearing in his hand, an impression in linen of a rifted oak ; and while his oblation is consuming, he also recites appropriate verses. All the remaining memento's being offered in the same way, the priest desires the Ingannatti to form a ring, and dance three times round the urn into which their offerings were thrown, each taking out some ashes as he passes. They then sing the following madrigal expressive of their joy at being freed from their amorous chains.

Gloriosi Intronati

Che da i penfier d'amor liberi, e sciolti,
Poggiate al ciel con sì fidata scorta,
Nel bel desio raccolti,
Fuggite quel che sol danno v'apporta,
Quel così vago, e bel che sì vi piace,
E cosa vana e frate,
Spiegate adunque l'ale
Per farvi al mondo eterni, e in ciel beati.

Freedom's immortal heirs,

Who, from the chains of Cupid left at large,
Climb upward, following your celestial guide,
Fraught with an holy charge
Of thoughts that mount above the stormy tide
Of love. That form which caught your eyes of old
Was empty, frail, and vain ;
So spread your wings a long release to gain.
From low sublunar cares.

When the vocal music ceases, they resume the dance in a ring, and the priest desires that each Iagannotto may throw the ashes which he holds in his hand, over his shoulder, and thus committing them to the wind, pursue the road which leads to heaven.

Le gitti al vento, e senza mai voltarvi
Seguite il bel camin, ch' al ciel vi mena.

The musician who opened the sacrifice, enters again, and, after he has sung a few ottave to his lyre, a prose drama entitled "Commedie delle Ingannati" commences.

This drama is founded upon a novel of Banello which bears the following title ; *Nicuola innamorata di Lattanzio va a servirlo vestita da paggio, e dopo molti casi seco si marita ; e ciò che ad un suo fratello avvenne*³. In the conduct of the story, the author seldom departs from the novelist. Nor is he more delicate in the description of scenes of amorous dalliance, particularly in *Att. IV., sc. 5.* where Pasquella describes the secret meeting between her mistress and Fabritio. Amongst the interlocutors we find a Spaniard speaking his native language. And in Messer Piero we are, I believe,

³ *Novelle. Lond. 1792. tom v., p. 287.* | pell truly observes, this novel is, to Belleforest translated this tale into | all appearance, the foundation of the French, and inserted it in his *Hist.* | serious part of the *Twelfth Night* of *trag. tom iv. biff. 7.* And, as Mr. Ca- | Shakespeare.

presented with the first pedant that appeared upon the Italian stage. This character, who is as prodigal of Latin as the Holofernes of Shakespeare, is well supported ⁶.

The next piece (which is also in prose) is entitled, "L'Amor Costante ⁷. Comedia del Signor Stordito Intronato, composta per la venuta dell' Imperatore (Charles V.) in Siena l'anno del xxxvi." As a compliment to their imperial guest, the Intronati, on this occasion, exhibited between the acts *varij abbattimenti di diverse sorte d'armi et intrecciati, ogni cosa tempi e misure di Mo-*

⁶ As both the original, and the French translation of this comedy appeared before Shakespeare was born, it is possible it might have met his observation in either language; and if it did not supply him with the leading fable of the *Twelfth Night*, it might at least, have suggested to him the idea of dramatizing the novel of Bandello. There are not, however, any very striking traits of resemblance between the English and the Italian comedies. Yet it is deserving of notice, that there are in the latter two characters which do not appear in the novel,—I mean a pedant and a foolish, drunken servant,—characters which are not unlike some we find in the English drama. Sir Toby, it is true, interlards his conversation with Latin, yet he is not, like Piero, a decided pedant. But might not Piero have been the prototype of Holofernes?

The pedant was now no uncommon character upon the Italian stage. To this class of scholars, belongs the Maestro Vico of Contile in his *Pf-*

cara, Mil. 1550. The prologue to the *Spagnolas* (Ven. 1549) of A. Calmo, is delivered by a pedant of Ragusa. And G. B. Pescatore introduces a school-master in *Love*, in his *Nina*, Ven. 1558.

⁷ In Ven. per Agostino Bindoni, l'anno M.D.L. The earliest edition is that of Ven. 1540.—*L'Ortenzio* of the same author, was also recited in the presence of Charles V. And again, in 1560, before Cosimo I. The decorations of the front of the stage on the latter occasion, are thus described by S. U. Azzolini. "Nell' alto disegno si vede l'arma del duca, e sotto l'arma la seguente iscrizione.

GENEROLO INTRONATO
TRUCCORUM PRINCIPES
INTRONATORUM HILARITAS.

E sotto queste parole si vede la Zucca con li pistelli, insegne dell' academia. Al destro lato la figura della Poesia, col motto: *mihi est utile dulci*; ed al manco lato quella della commedia, col motto: *Vita speculum*."

refaba. I am inclined to think that, as a further compliment to the emperor, it was also on this occasion that the Italian Captain (an important character in the early Italian comedy) first yielded his place to the Capitano Spagnuolo⁸. This conjecture is founded upon the following passage in the prologue.

Prolog. Per Dio si che ci potreste far servitio: perche havian de bisogno d'uno che facci meglio un Capitano; voi lo fareste per eccellentia.

Spag. Señor si que lo hare, y me fera poco trabajo por que otravez he seido Capitan.

But it was not merely in the adoption of a single character that the Italian comic poets followed the Spanish writers: they took for their model the corrupt form of the Spanish comedy, and, for a while, copied it with the most abject servility⁹. Several of our most illustrious dramatic

⁸ "Le capitain Espagnol petit à petit détruisit le Capitain ancien Italien. Dans le tems du passage de Charles—Quint en Italie, ce personnage fût introduit sur notre Théâtre. La nouveauté emporta les suffrages du public; notre Capitain Italien fut obligé de se tiare, et le Capitain Espagnol resta le maître du champ de bataille." *Hist. du Theat. Ital.* t. II. p. 5-5. Figures of those rival captains may be found among the plates which illustrate Riccoboni's valuable work. About the year 1680 the Spanish Captain retired from the Italian stage, and was succeeded by that eternal poltron,—Scaramuccio.

⁹ Perhaps the celebrated Spanish tragi comedy of *Celestina* assisted in

corrupting the purity of the Italian stage. This comedy, which is known to the English reader under the title of *The Spanish Rogue*, was translated into Italian so early as 1506. Several editions have since appeared. One printed in 1531 now lies before me with an argument and a print in wood to each scene. This edition, with all the original obscenities, is dedicated to a lady,—Feltria de Campo Fregosa,—at whose desire this new version was undertaken. If the Italian ladies sanctioned such publications, Riccoboni need not be surprised "du libertinage des mœurs qui se trouve dans les premières comedies de notre (his) nation," *tom.* ii. p. 150.

writers (says Gravina, alluding, with indignation, to this practice) introduced the Greek and Latin taste upon the Italian stage,—*banno all' Italica scena trasportato il greco, e latino gusto*,—before the mean spirit of our courts, adulating their powerful invaders, tarnished the glory of their native liberty, and compelled the nation to acquiesce in an humiliating imitation of those who had borrowed from us the first ray of philosophic light ⁵. The innovation which excited the indignation of Gravina, is ascribed to Giacinto Cicognini, who flourished about the middle of the seventeenth century ⁶.

“L'Amor Costante” was written by Aleffandro Piccolomini, of the family of Pius II. He was, says Crescimbeni, one of the most celebrated philosophers and astronomers of his time, and one of the firmest pillars—*più salde colonne*,—of the academia degl' Intronati. He died archbishop of Patrasco in 1578 ⁷. Among the sonnets of his compatriot, Luca Contile, is one addressed to him beginning,

Tanti e tai frutti de le tue fatiche.

⁵ *Della Rag. Poet. p. III. Vid. also Ragg. di Paines. cent. 1, ragg. 78.*

⁶ He taught his countrymen, says Salvini, “di fare le commedie con moltiplicità d'accidenti, e varj intrecci alla moda di Spagna.” *Ann. Sopra la Fiera di M. Buonarroti, p. 456.* Cicognini was a native of Flo-

rence, and author of the celebrated musical drama of *Giufone*.

⁷ *Ist. della vol. poet. t. ii, p. 415.* In 1611 appeared in Siena, a collection in two volumes of the *Commedie degli accademici Intronati di Siena, per Bart. Francescibi*, which include the dramas of Piccolomini.

But the "Virginia" of Bernardo Accolti should, by chronological right, have preceded these two dramas, (if, as we presume, it was exhibited in the theatre of the Intronati;) for it was printed so early as 1513⁵: however, as it is not accompanied with any information in regard to the usages of the academy, or the mode of representation, it was determined not to introduce it to the reader's notice till the *arcana* of the Intronati had been opened. The occasion on which this comedy was first represented, was the nuptials of Antonio Spannochì. The plot is founded upon *Novella VII. Giornata III.*, of the "Decamerone" of Boccaccio, the source whence Shakespeare drew the subject of his "All's well that ends well." At the beginning, the argument is given in a sonnet which I shall insert in the notes⁶;

⁵ Fir. a stanza di Aless. Fran. Rossetti. Another edition appeared at Ven. 1515. In the frontispiece of the former the author is represented sitting in a meditating posture, with a book open before him, and the words UNICO. ARET. inscribed beneath. I shall transcribe the full title of an edition in my possession. *Comedia del preclarissimo Messer Bernardo Accolti: Scrittore Apostolico: et Abbreviatore: recitata nelle nozze del magnifico Antonio Spannochì: nella inchiesta di Siena.* At the end we read; *Finita la comedia: et capitoli: et frambochi di Messer Bernardo Accolti Aretino Stampata in Firenze. Anno M.D.XVIII.*

ARGOMENTO.

⁶ Virginia amando el re guarisce, et chiede,
di Salerno el gran principe in marito;
Qual costretto a sposarla, e poi partito
per mai tornar fin lei viva si vede:
Cerca Virginia scrivendo, mercede,
ma el principe da molta ira assalito,
li domanda s'a lei vuol sia redito,
dua condition qual impossibil crede.
Però Virginia sola, et travestita,
pastendo, ogni impossibil conditione

and in this place I shall transcribe, merely as a specimen of the measure in which the piece is written⁷, the following stanza from the opening of the second act.

Dura profana abhorrita fortuna :
mai contenta star ferma in uno stato,
tu sempre giri con rota importuna
sèl basso elevi, & l'alto hai ruinato.
Et l'huom che giusto senza causa alcuna
persegui : & quel che injusto fai beato :
ne morto o prego in te pietate arreca
pero chiamata sei fallace & cieca.

The title of this piece is a singular monument of paternal affection,—Virginia was the name of a beloved daughter of the author⁸ !

Accolti was one of the bright constellation of wits that shed its effulgence on the court of Urbino at the beginning of the sixteenth century. His great excellence in the art of singing *all'improvvisa*, rendered him a favourite in the court of

adempie al fin con prudentia infinita.
Onde el principe pien d'amirazione,
lei di favore et gratia rivestita,
Sposa di nuovo con molto affectione.

Ed. 1518.

Without meaning to insinuate that Shakespeare had any obligations to this comedy, I shall observe a striking coincidence : a scene in the first act of *All's well, that ends well*, opens with an ottave, and a letter in the third act is couched in the form of a sonnet.

⁷ Both Riccoboni and Allacci assert that this comedy is in prose. The words of the latter are : " in prosa con alcune ottave, e terzine." The whole comedy is ottava rima, with the exception of a few terzine.

⁸ Luca Contile has left a monument of gratitude not less singular in his comedy of *La Cesare Gonzaga*, (Mil. 1550) which bears the name of his patron. In this comedy a song is introduced in the manner of the modern comic opera.

Leo X. and obtained for him, the honourable appellation of l'unico Accolti²; an appellation under which he is immortalized in the *Orlando Furioso*.

Il gran lume Aretin, l'unico Accolti³.

Leo, who always rewarded those who ministered to his amusement, conferred on Accolti the united offices of Scrittore Apostolico and Abbreviatore, and invested him with the seigniory of the little city of Nepi at the mouth of the Tiber. But as he can no longer enjoy the countenance or the munificence of his patron, perhaps his proudest distinction is that of his having been one of the ~~fast~~ and most decided promoters of the secular drama in Italy⁴. He died in the year 1500.

LA CONGREGA DE' ROZZI boasts even an higher antiquity than that of the Accademia degl' Intronati, or of any of the other Italian academies.

² This faculty in Accolti gave birth to the following epigram by Gio. Mattea Tocani.

Carmina, quæ subito tibi sunt effusa calore,

Vel quæ sunt lima sæpe polita tua,
Qui legit, haud cernit quid differat impetus arte,

Et procusa pari cuncta labore putat.

Atque ait: hæc si est ars, nihil hac est cultus arte

Si furor, est ars hoc culta furore minus.

When it was known he would "improvvisare," says Tiraboschi, "chiusi deansi le botteghe, e da ogni parte si accorreva in folla ad udirlo, si ponevan guardie alle porte, s'illuminavan le stanze, ed i più dotti uomini ed i più venerandi prelati vi si recavano a gara, ed il poeta era spesso interrotto dagli alti applausi degli uditori," vi, p. 859.

³ *Cant.* xlvii, st. 10.

⁴ *Mem. on It. Trag. p.* (—?).

It originated in a meeting of the artists of Florence, at which, says Zeno, open war was declared against sloth⁵. At first they confined themselves to the recitation of sonnets and canzoni; but after sometime, (says Francesco Faleri, their poetical historian⁶) they spread their wings and took a bolder flight⁷, signalizing themselves in the exhibition of rustic comedies and rural masquerades. The fame of their excellence in theatrical exhibitions spread through the neighbouring states, and at length reached Rome. Leo, whose mind was peculiarly awake to every promise of elegant amusement, invited the Congrega to the Vatican. In 1517 they complied with the requisition, and were so successful in their attempt to gain the favour of his holiness, that they received an annual invitation to Rome during the remainder of his pontificate⁸. It was by the Rozzi the "Sofonisba" of Triffino, and the "Mandragola" of Machiavelli, were performed in the presence of this pontiff. Flattered by the applause of their countrymen, and vain of the no-

⁵ Verso il fine del secolo XV, molti giovani Senesi di umore allegro e piacevole, tutti artisti di professione, convenuti insieme, dichiararono all'ozio un' aperta guerra. tom. i, p. 397.

⁶ Faleri of Sienna wrote (1666) an oration in terzine rusticali, in which the rise and progress of this institution is traced. This piece, from which Ap. Zeno gives some extracts, still remains unedited. *Vid.*

B. della Elog. Ital. tom. i, p. 397.

In 1757, *Relaz. Stor. dell' accad. de' Rozzi di Siena*, appeared in Paris.

⁷ Dopo alquanti dì stesero l'alc, &c.

⁸ Chiamava ogn' anno il decimo Leone
Dal Vaticano i Rozzi mentre
visse,
Per sentir tue commedie, e sue
canzone.

tice of the father of the Church, they dropped the humble denomination of Congrega, and assumed, in 1531, the title of Academy, in imitation of the Intronati ⁵. When this innovation took place, it was proposed by some of the members to change the name of Rozzi with the title of the institution ; but Angelo Cenni, a distinguished member, and a farrier by profession, wisely recommended it to them not to expose themselves to ridicule by assuming a denomination unsuitable to their rank in life. At length it was resolved to preserve the original name ; and, at the same time, they chose for their seal an old cork with the following motto, “ *Chi quì soggiorna acquista quel che perde.*” It was further proposed by Scipione, trumpeter to his holiness, that each member should, like the Intronati, assume some characteristic appellation, and annually elect an Arci-Rozzo. In our days, says Zeno, this academy departing from the original design of the institution, admitted doctors, and professors of rhetoric and of all the higher species of literature ; so that it is no longer distinguished from the other learned societies of Italy. The theatre belonging to this academy was standing near the cathedral when De La Lande visited Sienna in 1787.

⁵ aver d' un' Accademia il nome
Con l'Impresa, conforme gl' Intronati.

That the number of dramas written by the primitive members of this academy was very considerable, may be inferred from the circumstance of our finding above forty of their early comic productions in the catalogue of the Biblioteca Pinelliana. Of the mode of representation I am not prepared to give a satisfactory account ; but it appears from the title-pages of some of their comedies, that morrice-dances, dumb-shows, and interludes of different kinds, frequently extended the entertainment and varied the amusements of the evening. Either from a predilection for *terzarima*, or in observance of some established regulation, or ancient usage, almost all the pieces intended for representation in this academy, were written in that measure⁶. A short monologue from " *Il Romito Negromante*," by Angelo Cenni, a member of this institution, shall serve as a specimen of the versification of those pieces.

Atto I. Sc. 4.

Gli altri giorni veloci più che 'l vento
 Sempre son sparsi à me ; questo, in che aspetto
 Veder gran cosa è lungo ad ognun cento.

Io vo' sonare, al consueto effetto,
 Per esser buon tenuto, la campana.
 Quanto piacer mi prendo ! Oh qual diletto !

⁶ *In Siena, 1547.*

Di queste donne, che con mente insana,
Vengono a me, e me tengon qual santo ;
Ne fan quel che s' asconde in questa lana.

Con Pater Nostrie collo torto intanto .
Mi cavo el viver mio senza fatica :
L'uffizio et i digiun posti ho da canto.

Con l'arte maga mia mente s'intrica
Vie più che in altro, ond' ho angioletta,
A vecchiezza, di me crudel nemica.

Fleet as the viewless currents of the air
By Æol driven, my former days are fled,
But those dread moments, clogg'd with anxious care,
And import high, retreat with tardy tread.

Each hour an hundred seems. The sacring bell
Sounding the welcome signal, round shall lead
(Ye gods what transport !) to my lonely cell
Full many a moon-struck dame along the mead.

They hold me for an heaven-commission'd sage,
Nor know the secrets by this lamb-like vest
Conceal'd. My orisons and humble guise
Secure with faintly shew, a life of rest.

But my connection with the nether skies
Gives a black prompter from the realms unblest,
A meddling demon who delights to wage
Incessant war with my unhappy age.

*

XI. **W**E are told that before the institution
of the Academies of which we have just given
some account, Istrioni, or hired players, always

acted extempore. The extemporaneous pieces alluded to, still prevail in Italy under the denomination of *COMMEDIE DELL' ARTE*, or, *COMMEDIE A SOGGETTO*, "a cant name," says Baretti, "for those burlesque plays substituted to the *Commedie Antiche*. These," he continues, "are not wholly of modern invention, but lineally descended from the *Atellanes* of the Romans, which kept their power of pleasing the Italians from generation to generation, through all the barbarous ages, standing their ground, in many obscure parts of Italy, against the regular tragedies and comedies produced by the numerous successors of Triffino and Bibbiena.—The personages of this new kind of dramatic entertainments, played in masks⁷. Each of these was

⁷ The modern mask differs as well in the form as in the use, from the *persona*, or mask, of the ancients. It neither covers the head entirely, enlarges the voice, nor usually exhibits aggravated features. Vid. *Le masq. sceniq.* Sc. d'ant. Roma, da F. de Ficoreni, Rom. 1736, and *Off.* subjoined to *Ulyssé, Trag. Fir.* 1778. It is, in general, a thin covering of silk or leather, which sometimes conceals the whole, and sometimes only part, of the face, with apertures for the eyes and the prominent features. The characteristic mask is rarely used, and when used, chiefly confined to certain characters. Though the half-mask is generally considered as a modern invention, it would seem to have been sometimes worn in the ancient theatres; probably by the

dancers. A dancing figure, with an half-mask, occurs in *Vitt. d'Ercol.* tom. iv. tav. xxxv. It is now, I believe, generally acknowledged that the invention of the dramatic mask is justly ascribed to Etruria,—

To her, e'en Athens, as the learn'd declare,

Might owe the mask dramatic
muses wear,

are the words of Mr. Hayley, in a poem equally elegant, instructive, and pathetic *Ess. on Sculp.* ep. iv. see also *Etr. regul.* The satire of the ancient fabulist will, I fear, too often apply to the modern dramatic mask.

Personam tragicam forte vulpes
viderat,

O quanta species, inquit, cerchrym
non habet!

originally intended as a kind of characteristic representation of some particular Italian district or town. Thus Pantalone was a Venetian merchant⁸, Dottore a Bolognese physician⁹, Spaviento a Neapolitan braggadocio, Pullicinella a wag of Apulia, Giangurgolo and Coviello¹ two clowns of Calabria, Gelsomino a Roman beau, Beltrame a Milanese simpleton², Brighella a Ferarese pimp, and Arlecchino a blundering servant of Bergamo. Each of these personages was

⁸ This character appeared at a very early period upon the English stage. It is noticed, and thus described, by Shakespeare in *As you like it*,

—the lean and slipper'd Pantaloon,
With spectacles on nose.

⁹ The ridiculous manners, and pedantic loquacity, of *Graziano delle Cetiche da Francolino*, an old barber of Bologna, suggested the original idea of the character of the Dottore, a character which seems to be a ludicrous modification of the pedant. When Riccoboni began in 1690, to frequent the theatres, this character was occupied by G. B. Paghetti, and, after him, by Gal. Savorini. Except these actors, says he, "tous les comediens de ce tems-là étoient ignorans." i, p. 73. Prior to this period, however, the Italian actors were, in general, as eminent for their literary acquirements, as for their powers of gesticulation and skill in declamation: indeed, some of the best comedies of which Italy can boast, were the productions of professed players.

¹ The famous Salvator Rosa is said to have excelled in Coviello, a character, the original of which must have frequently met his observation, while he was studying his art amidst the romantic wilds of Calabria. Salvator is praised, by Lor. Lippi, as an actor (under the anagrammatic name of Selva Rosata) in his *Malmantile*; and censured, as a painter, by Mr. Fuseli, in his *Lectures*, p. 77.

² Niccolò Barbieri was the most celebrated Beltrame of his day; Gio. B. Andreini, author of the *Adamo*, &c. was equally admired as an Amoroso. Both these actors enjoyed the protection, and experienced the munificence, of Lewis XIII. of France. The dramatic productions of Andreini I have noticed elsewhere; (*Hist. Mem. on It. trag.* p. 166) here I shall observe, that the *Inverities* of Barbieri furnished the subject of the *Etourdi* of Moliere. Barbieri is not more celebrated for his abilities as an actor and an author, than for his obstinate chastity during his widowhood; a virtue of rather rare occurrence in his profession.

clad in a peculiar dress; each had his peculiar mask; and each spoke the dialect of the place he represented.—Besides these, and a few other such personages, of which at least four were introduced in each play, there were the Amorofo's or Innamorato's; that is, some men and women³ who acted serious parts, with Smeraldina, Colombina, Spilletta, and other females who played the parts of servetta's or waiting-maids. All these spoke Tuscan or Roman, and wore no masks."

"The authors of these pieces," he further observes, "only wrote in a very compendious way, the business of the scene in a progressive order; and sticking two copies of the *Scenariò*, (so this kind of dramatic skeleton is called) in two lateral back parts of the stage, before the entertainment began, each actor caught the subject of the scene with a glance, whenever called forth by his cue⁴,

³ Here Baretti must be understood to speak of the modern *Commedie dell' arte*; for female players were unknown in the Italian theatres before the year 1560. *Hist. du Theat. It. i, p. 42*. I have elsewhere observed, that the Italians were the first who introduced women upon the stage. *Hist. Mem. on It. trag. p. 199*. Cecchini and Riccoboni were my authorities. Polonia Zuccati, the wife of Valerio, is the first actress I have been able to discover on the public stage of Italy. She is famed for her talents in *commedie a soggetto*, which she often exercised in conjunction with her husband, Frate Armonio,

and Lodovico Dolce. But Vincenza Armani, a Venetian actress of the same period, seems to have possessed greater versatility of talent. She excelled in pastoral, in comedy, and in tragedy, and, to borrow the words of Quadrio, "esprimo con tanta forza gli affetti delle persone che rappresentava, che avesse il freno degli umani petti in mano." She flourished about 1570.

⁴ A similar practice prevailed upon the English stage at an early period. This appears from the late Mr. Steeven's description of *the Plotts of the seven deadly sins*, discovered by him in Dulwich college, and refer-

and either singly or colloquially, spoke extempore to the subject. Of these Scenario's, or skeletons, a good many are still extant. One Flaminio Scala, a comedian, has published fifty of his own invention 1611⁵. I once saw the book, but could not make much of any of his plots, which are not easily unravelled but by comedians long accustomed to catch their reciprocal hints⁶." These Scenario must, however, have been intelligible in the time of the celebrated cardinal Borromeo, archbishop of Milan, and afterwards a saint; for we find that such as were intended for exhibition in the city over which he presided, were examined by a person appointed by him, and if nothing was found either in the action, or the conduct, of the piece that could corrupt the

red by Mr. Malone to 1589. "The Platt, (for so it is called) is fairly written out on pasteboard in a large hand, and undoubtedly contained directions to be stuck up near the prompter's station. It has an oblong hole in its centre, sufficient to admit a wooden peg." *Steven's Shakspeare*, vol. ii, p. 498. As Pansalone is introduced in some other Plots of the same period, it may be presumed that the practice was borrowed from Italy.

⁵ Flaminio Scala fût le premiere qui composa des Canevas de comedies, et qui les fit imprimer: la construction de ses fables est très foible, et même j'oserai dire mauvaise, mais sur-tout la plus grande partie en est très-scandaleuse. *Hist. du Th. It.* i, p. 40. Goldoni possessed "un manuscritto del secolo

quindicesimo molto ben conservato, e legato in pergamena, che contiene 120 soggetti di comedie Italiane che chiamano *Commedie d'arte*, e ne' quali la base fondamentale del comico è sempre Pantalone," &c. *Mem.* ii, p. 187. Moliere's many obligations to the *Canevas* of the Italian comedians are noticed by Riccoboni in *Observ. sur la Comed. Paris*, 1736, p. 146-147. Vid. *Append. No. XIII.*

⁶ *Acc. of Italy*, vol. i, chap. xi. See also Goldoni on this subject, in his entertaining *Memorie*, ii, p. 186-188. The pleasure which the performance of Sacchi and Fiorili in the *commedie a soggetto*, afforded Baretto at Venice, induced him to become an advocate for that species of drama.

innocence of youth, or scandalize the piety of the christian auditor, the holy cardinal authorized the representation by his signature at the foot of the manuscript ⁷. Riccoboni was acquainted, in his youth, with an old actress who had seen some Scenario's signed by the cardinal ⁸. Several efforts were made during the progress of the drama in Italy to alienate the public favour from this preposterous species of drama; and about the middle of the last century, Goldoni, in the comic system which he endeavoured to establish, made a decided attempt at its total abolition ⁹; an attempt which has elicited an eulogium from the lively genius of M. Tenhove, "It has been only in the eighteenth century," says he, "that Nature has at last produced on the shore of the Adriatic gulf, her son Goldoni, true and simple, but as negligent as herself." However there is something so congenial to the Italian genius in the *Commedie dell' arte*, that it has continued to keep possession of the Italian stage through all its various revolutions ¹. And it is a fact as extraordinary as it is curious and true, that the Sannio

⁷ *Hist. du Th. It.* i, p. 58.

⁸ *Ibid.* A few copies had been also seen by Angelo Constantini in the gallery of Sig. Canonico Settala at Milan. Constantini was well known on the French stage about the close of the sixteenth century, under the name of Mezetin, a mixed character, invented by himself, and chiefly

calculated to display the graces of his person.

⁹ *Mem.* ii, p. 188.

¹ Perhaps national pride contributed to support the *commedie d'arte* upon the Italian stage, as "un genere di commedie in cui l'Italia s'era distinta, e che nessuna nazione aveva saputo imitare." *Ibid.* ii, p. 186.

of the ancient Romans is still the favourite dramatic hero of the modern Italians, under the name and motley form of ARLECCHINO².

XII. IT now remains to notice an innovation in the comic department of the Italian drama by Angelo Beolco detto Ruzzante who, according to the historian of his native Padua, surpassed Plautus in writing comedies, and Roscius in representing them. In 1530 this writer, we are told, published six comedies in prose³, in which the dramatis personæ speak the different dialects of Venice, Bologna, Bergamo, Padua, Florence,

² *Hist. du Theat. It. i, chap. 1. Lett. of Lit. p. 204, and Hist. Mem. on It. Trag. p. 197, note (1).* The most celebrated harlequin that appeared in Italy, after the revival of the drama, was Pietro Maria Cecchini, an ingenious dramatic writer, and author of some excellent discourses on comedy. Cecchini's great excellence in this character, induced the emperor Matthias to ennoble him. To this noble harlequin succeeded Zaccagnino, and Trufaldino, who "fermerent la porte en Italie aux bons arlequins," says the author of *Hist. du Tb. It. i, p. 73*. On the origin and antiquity of this character, see the *Append. No. I.*

Lady M. W. Montagu bears testimony to the excellence of the comic powers of the Italians, particularly in the character which is the subject of this note. Having complied with the requisition of the inhabitants of the neighbouring village to erect a theatre in the saloon of her romantic abode at

Louvere, she says, "I was surprised at the beauty of their scenes, which, though painted by a country painter, are better coloured, and the perspective better managed, than in any of the second-rate theatres in London. The performance was yet more surprising, the actors being all peasants; but the Italians have so natural a genius for comedy, they acted as well as if they had been brought up to nothing else, particularly the Arlequins, who far surpassed any of our English, though only the tailor of the village, and I am assured never saw a play in any other place." *Works, Lond. 1803, vol. iv, p. 210.*

³ *Hist. du Tb. It. i, p. 50.* In this assertion there are two errors. Ruzzante published only five comedies; and his first comedy, *la Piovana*, did not appear till 1548. The remaining four were published in different years. In 1584, a complete edition of this writer's dramatic works was published in *Vicenza*.

and even the language of modern Greece ⁴. The author of "L'Histoire du Theatre Italien," seems to think that the first idea of this confusion of tongues was borrowed from the "Pænulus" of Plautus; but it is more probable that it might have been suggested by the *Commedie dell' arte*, or rather, perhaps, by the masquerades of the carnival whence, it is allowed, he took the masks and distinctive habits of his characters. In order, says Riccoboni, to render his old men comic, he disguised them, sometimes in the dress of Pantalone, sometimes in that of the Dottore Bolognese, clothing their part of the dialogue in the respective dialects of these two characters ⁵. To his servants he gave the dialect and peasants dress of Bergamo, because, as he alleged, the lower order of people in that district, is said to be chiefly composed of knaves and fools. Much praise has been lavished on the poetical and theatrical talents of Ruzzante by the writers of his country. Sperone Speroni calls him the Roscius of his age, and applauds his happy use of the rustic dialect ⁶. Bernardo Varchi prefers his comedies to the

⁴ Andrea Calmo imitated Ruzzante with so much success, that the *Rodiana* of this author was, for a while, attributed to him, and even printed under his name. In a subsequent edition, Calmo asserts his right to this comedy, and observes, that it was played at Venice in 1540, and afterwards in Trevigi.

In the dialogue of the *Rodiana*, the living Greek, and several dialects of Italy, are intermingled. To his *Pozione* is prefixed a prologue *alla greca*. Calmo, like Ruzzante, was an admired actor.

⁵ tom. i, p. 51. *Hist. Mem. on It. Trag.* p. 217, note (g).

⁶ *Dialog. Ven.* 1544, p. 44.

Atellanes of the Romans. *Credo*, says he, *che i nostri Zanni facciano più ridere, che i loro* (the Romans) *mimi non facevano, e che le commedie del Ruzzante da Padua, così contadine, avanzino quelle, che dalla città d' Atella, si chiamavano Atellane*⁷. While Riccoboni admits the difficulty of understanding, and, of course, enjoying his ' Babylonish dialect,' he thinks he afforded an important service to the Italian stage by rendering it a continual masquerade,—*une mascarade continuelle*⁸. His fellow citizen, Gio. Battista Rota, erected a monument to his memory in the church of S. Daniel near the prato delle valle. With the inscription on this monument, as a just tribute to the merit of the poet and the player, I shall close this essay,—

V. S.

ANGELO BEOLCO RUZANTI PATAVINO

NULLIS IN SCRIBENDIS AGENDISQUE COMOEDIIS

INGENIO, FACUNDIA, AUT ARTE SECUNDO

JOCIS ET SERMONIB. AGREST.

APPLAUSU OMNIUM FACETISS:

QUI NON SINE AMICOR. MOERORE E VITA DECES—

SIT ANN: DOMINI M,D,XLII. DIE XVII. MARTII:

ÆTATIS VERO XL.

JO: BAPT: ROTA PATAVINUS TANTÆ PRÆSTANTIÆ

ADMIRAT. FIGN. HOC SEMFIT. IN TESTIMON.

FAMA AC NOMIN.

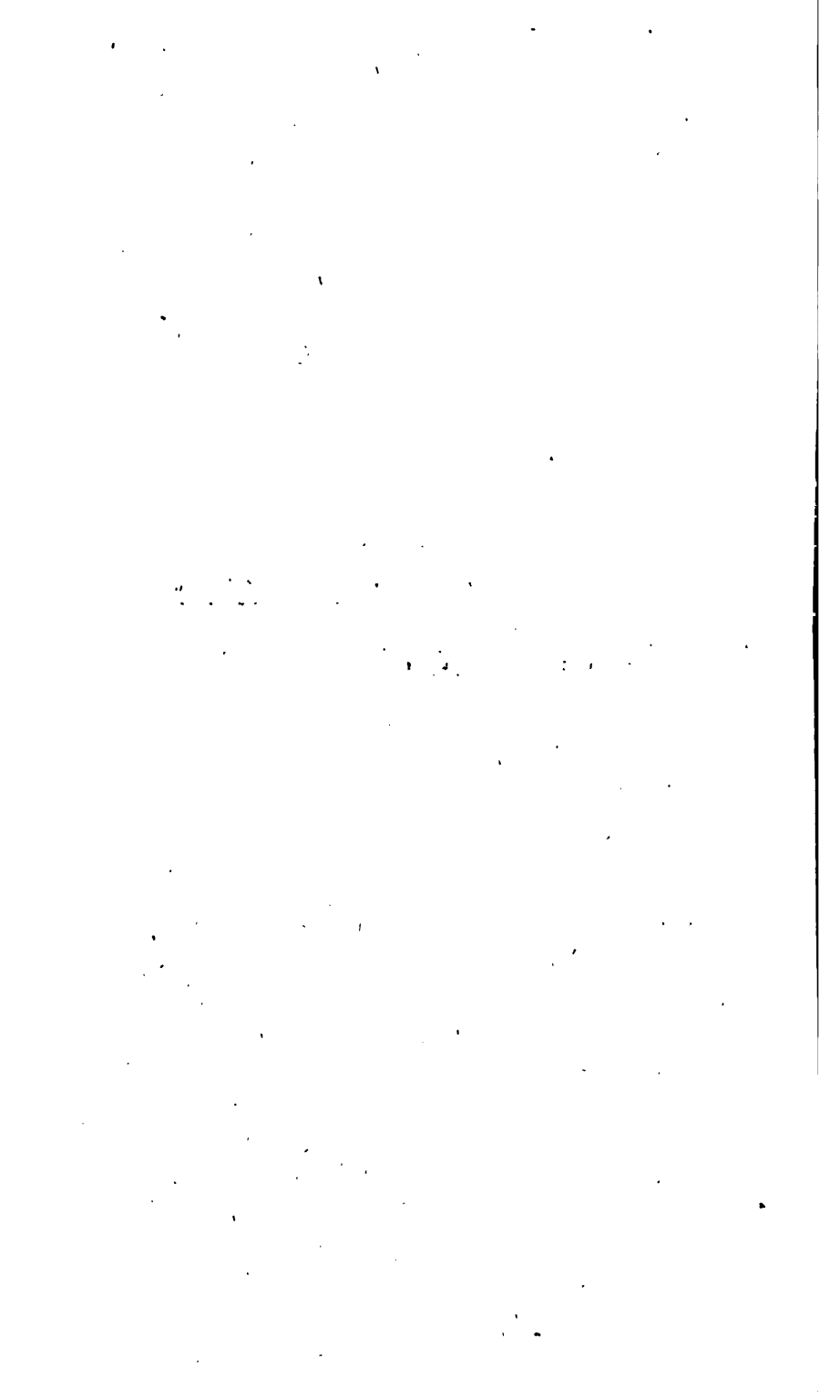
P. C.

ANN. A MUNDO REDEMPT: M,D,LX.

⁷ *Ereol. p. 342, Fir. 1730.*

⁸ *Tom. i, p. 54.*

**ADDITIONAL NOTES, AND
CORRECTIONS.**



ADDITIONAL NOTES, AND CORRECTIONS.

SECTION I. Tiraboschi, speaking of the period chiefly treated of in this section, says, "non vi ha forse alcun secolo in tutta la storia della Letteratura Italiana, in cui tanto io abbia incontrato di difficoltà, e di ostacoli a superare," *tom. v. pref.* After perusing this candid acknowledgment, the reader will not wonder that I should have encountered many difficulties in reviewing the same dark and tempestuous period. Wanting the clear and steady light of history, I was sometimes tempted to indulge in conjecture; an indulgence, however, which I trust it will be found I have not wantonly abused.

Pag. 5. Note (A). Atella was a small town near Naples, now called Aversa.] According to a late enlightened traveller, Aversa was built near, not upon, the ruins of Atella. "Aversa," says he, "was not built upon the ruins of Atella, an ancient city of the Oscans: its ruins are to be seen two miles to the south, at a place called S. Arpino di Atella." *Swinburne, Trav. in the Two Sicilies, vol. iv. p. 325.* The learned reader will observe, and correct, a typographical error, occasioned by my distance from the press, which runs through the note (p. 5.) to which I refer. *For*, Attella, and Atellanea, *read*, Atella and Atellanes. The same error occurs in the quotation from Bishop Warburton.

Pag. 5. l. 13. But in the representation in the Coliseum, the characters were filled by inanimate figures.] In order to convey a clear idea of a mute mystery, I shall transcribe Mr. Wright's account of a representation of *The Passion*, which he saw at Milan on Good Friday, in the year 1721. "We saw," says he, "at the church of St. Angelo, a representation of Mount Calvary; our Saviour and the two thieves on three crosses, carved in wood, and painted, as big as the life: the blessed virgin, St. John, &c. stood below the cross, and palm trees were set round the top of the mount. In the afternoon the Christ was taken from the cross; the body was so contrived with joints to the several limbs, that as soon as it was unnailed, the head and all the parts hung quite loose, to represent the circumstances of the Passion in the most lively manner they could to the people. I have been informed that the same practice is frequent in the Greek church too."

"In the procession upon this solemnity, they carry the several instruments, and other things mentioned in the story of the Passion, or supposed to attend it. There were a great many that carried crosses: the ladders, nails, pincers, the pillar, and scourges, the coat without seam, dice, spear, and sponge, were carried by others: some of them had crowns of thorns on their heads, chains about their middle, and ropes about their necks. The dead body was carried along after them, under a canopy, and the blessed virgin in wax, as mourning over it (the sorrow very well expressed): and solemn-mournful music played all the while. *Obs. made in travelling through France, Italy, &c. p. 473. Lond. 1764.*

Pag. 5. note (7). A religious society of both sexes, who began about the year 1208 to celebrate the festival of Easter in the Prato della Valle.] As the exhibition, which is supposed to have originated at the celebration of this festival, is one of the earliest dramatic spectacles of which any record remains, some account of the present state of the Prato della Valle may not be unacceptable to the curious reader. We shall borrow the words of an amusing and intelligent traveller. "The Prato della Valle, before this church (St. Giustini) is," says Dr. Smith, "a thing unique in its kind; a green oval inclosure, surrounded with a canal, along whose banks are ranged numerous statues of illustrious men of the country, standing on handsome pedestals, which are not yet all occupied; nor are the intended four bridges over the canal yet completed. Within this inclosure the annual fair is held." *Sketch of a Tour on the Continent, vol. iii. p. 7.*

Pag. 6. l. 4. The *Presepio* of Naples.] My accomplished friend, Sir Richard Clayton, observes to me, that "the *Presepio* of Naples is not merely confined to that city. It existed," he says, "some years ago in some parts of the south of France and borders of Italy, and the *Crèches* of Provence is nearly allied to it." I hope Mrs. Piozzi will pardon me if I should add a very ingenious conjecture in regard to the *Presepio*, from one of the letters with which she honoured me. "It seems to me," says she, "as though the *Presepio* of Naples represented the *rappresentazioni*, for I fancy the early ones made a whole town subservient to their purpose, Milan or Florence: clustering a few actors on a near hill, dressed up like the holy family, for example, and all the others following with presents, to imitate the *Tra Kè magi*, or whatever was the subject of the entertainment."

Pag. 7. l. 5. The affrighted muses fled with precipitation to the vine-clad hills and olive groves of Provence.] "About the age of Hugh Capet, founder of the third race of French kings, the poets of Provence," says Dr. Akenfide, "were in high reputation; a sort of strolling bards or rhapsodists, who went about the courts of princes and noblemen, entertaining them at festivals with music and poetry. They attempted both the epic, ode, and satire; and abounded in a wild and fantastic vein of fable, partly allegorical, and partly founded on traditionary legends of the Saracen wars. These were the rudiments of Italian poetry."—This note is intended to illustrate the following beautiful passage in *The Pleasures of Imagination. Book II. l. 13.—23.*

As long immur'd
In noon-tide darkness by the glimm'ring lamp,
Each muse and each fair science pin'd away

The sordid hours; while foul, barbarian hands
 Their mysteries profan'd, unstrung the lyre,
 And chain'd the soaring pinion down to earth.
 At last the muses rose, and spurn'd their bonds,
 And wildly warbling, scatter'd, as they flew,
 Their blooming wreaths from fair Valclusa's bow'rs
 To Arno's myrtle border, and the shore
 Of soft Parthenope.

Pag. 8. l. 20. When, in those ages, the marquisses of Este gave a solemn fête, or held a court at Ferrara, the Troubadours not only proffered their services.] "La cour d'Azzone VII. marquis de Ferrare, issu de l'illustre maison d'Este, fut," says M. Merian, "comme un rendez-vous où les Trouveurs et les Jongleurs affluèrent de toute part. Azzone régna depuis 1215 jusqu'en 1264." *Mém. sur Dante. Mém. de l'acad. roy. des sciences et belles lettres* (of Berlin), for 1784. Tiraboschi only does justice to the author of the memoir from which the foregoing passage is extracted, when he says, "Trai moderni scrittori che hanno illustrata la vita e il poema di Dante, deesi onorevole luogo a M. Merian." He certainly exhibits the clearest and most comprehensive view of the *Divina Commedia* which has yet been offered to the public. In proportion as M. Merian's memoir shall be diffused, Dante will be better understood, and more generally admired. He has rent, or removed, the veil which so long concealed his beauties, and brought to light

la Dottrina, che s'asconde
 Sottò 'l velame degli versi strani.

To the beauties of this wonderful poet, my friend Mr. Boyd has given new lustre. And his bold and energetic pencil would seem to have passed into the hands of the author of *The Pursuits of Literature*, when he undertook to sketch his character as a poet and a man.

Pag. 12. l. 2. Afforded them the charitable aid of his muse.] Petrarcha in the same letter which we have quoted, says, "Ils (the Jongleurs) vont chercher ces ressources pour vivre chez les meilleurs auteurs, de qui ils les obtiennent à force de prières, quelquefois même à prix d'argent, lorsque les besoins de l'auteur ou sa cupidité le rendent plus facile." *Mém. pour la vie de Petrarque*. iii. p. 655. The practice alluded to by Petrarcha probably prevailed not only in Italy but in England, and in every other country where there were wandering bards who sung verses to the harp in the courts of princes, or in the halls of the nobility. Is it then to be wondered at, that the rude songs ascribed to the English minstrels, should have for the most part, as an elegant writer observes "a pleasing simplicity, and many artless graces, which, in the opinion of no mean critics, have been thought to compensate for the want of higher beauties; and if they do not dazzle the imagination, are frequently found to interest the heart." *Reliq. of Anc. Eng. Poet. pref. xii.*

Pag. 33. l. 12. The younger Aldus printed it.] It was printed at Lucca, while Aldus was collecting materials for his life of Castruccio Castracani. M. Renouard thinks it does little credit to the Aldine press: it is, he says, "au dessous du médiocre." *Ann. de l'imp. des Aldes*, t. ii. p. 121. If the taste of Aldus had been as refined, as his learning was profound, the *Philodinus* would probably still remain an inedited manuscript.

Page 38. l. 25. The most celebrated Latin drama of this period, is the *Progne* of Gregorio Corraro.] Eight years after this drama issued from the press of the Academia della Fama, a Latin tragedy entitled *Progne* was acted at Oxford when Queen Elizabeth was there in 1566. *Wood, Hist. Antiq. Un. Oxon. lib. i. p. 287. col. 2.* This was, probably, the tragedy of *Progne* which some traveller had brought to England.

The academy under whose auspices this tragedy was printed, was founded by Feder. Badoaro, a Venetian senator, in 1556. "Elle étoit composée d'environ cent personnes," says M. Renourd, "les plus habiles dans tous les branches de la littérature et des sciences : à-peu-près sur le même plan qu'a été depuis établi l'Institut national de France." *Ann. de l'Imp. des Arts, t. ii. p. 86.*

Page 50. l. 22. The fame of Sulpitius' drama having spread to Venice, the directors of the amusements of the carnival of 1485, in that gay city, introduced upon their stage a melo-drama, entitled, *La Verità raminga*.] Tiraboschi questions the authenticity of this fact. He supposes that Bettinelli, who was Martinelli's authority, was misled by the author of *L'Histoire de la Musique*. Yet I am inclined to think that the fact is not totally without foundation, as the precise year (1485) of representation has been fixed, and repeatedly mentioned by various authors.

Page 53. l. 27. This singular production (*Fernandus Servatus*) is entitled, by the author, Tragi-comedy.] The *Fernandus Servatus* had escaped my notice when I asserted that the *Hadriana* and *Auripanda* "should be entitled *Histories* rather than tragedies; a distinction, however, which does not seem to have prevailed at any time in Italy." *Hist. mem. on It. Trag. p. 124.* I gladly embrace the present opportunity to retract this hasty assertion. It is observed by the author of a very ingenious *Essay on the origin of the English Stage* (*Reliq. of Anc. Eng. Poet. vol. i.*) that the plan of this species of drama was suggested by the ancient mysteries,—he might have added, the name too, since the denomination of *Istoria* is often given to the Italian mysteries of the 15th century.—I hope the historians of the English stage, and the commentators on our early poets, will at length see the necessity of extending their researches to the literature of Italy.

Page 54. Note (1). There is no theatre in the world has any thing so absurd as the English tragi-comedy.] This species of drama, which the nature of my plan has only obliged me to consider in an historical point of view, has been treated critically with much ability by two living writers, Mr. Pye and Mr. Pean. *Comm. on the Poet. of Aristotle, Lond. 1794, p. 127. Letters on the Drama, Lett. ix.* I refer with pleasure to two works, from which the reader may derive, as I have, much amusement and instruction.

Page 62. Note (1). Varillas, in the coarse language of his translator.] As I am not so fortunate as to possess the original work of Varillas (*Anecdotes de Florence*), all my extracts are drawn from Mr. Spence's inelegant and imperfect translation. Varilla's work is extremely amusing; but it should be considered rather as an historical romance than as an history. It contains, however, several authentic anecdotes.

Page 67. Note (2). Where Sannazaro learned to personify Mirth or Joy.] Some of the allegorical romances which appeared in France of this

12th and 13th centuries, might have supplied this personification. Mirth is personified in the *Roman de la Rose*.

Pag. 69. Note (5). Crispo's life of Sannazaro.] A just and elegant tribute to the memory of Sannazaro has been paid by Mr. Swinburne, in *Trav. in the Two Sicilies*, vol. iii. p. 73-77. I should have excepted Mr. Swinburne in my preface from amongst the English travellers who passed unheeded the church of Mergellina founded by Sannazaro. In fact, few objects to which literature has given attractions, escaped the observation of this truly enlightened traveller.

Pag. 75. By all these denominations, the species, &c.] Quadro gives the following account of the various denominations of the *Rappresentazioni*, and their respective derivations. "Se del Testamento Vecchio alcuna cosa trattavano, si appellavano da essi ordinariamente *Figure*; se dal Vangelo erano ricavate, *Vangeli* altresì erano dette; se da i misteri di nostra fede, *Misterii* ancor le chiamavano, col qual nome alle volte nominavano altresì le sacre istorie, e le ideali; se le operazioni de' santi trattavano, *Esempj*; e se le vite de' medesimi interamente rappresentavano, ora *Istorie*, ed ora *Spettacoli* le dicevano; nomi però, che non sempre ne' frontispizi ponevano, ne' quali per l'ordinario o quello di *Rappresentazione*, o quello di *Festa*, o l'uno, e l'altro congiunti insieme, e talvolta quello d' *Istoria*, o di *Vita* solo era lor dato; ma nel corpo di essi componimenti erano per lo più da loro autori collocati." He adds,—"Fuvvi chi anora tali rappresentazioni nominò *Commedie Spirituali*; tant' erano que' tempi rozzi." *Stor. e della rag. d'ogni. Poet. tom. iv. p. 55.*

It is presumed by the biographer of Chaucer, that "the minstrels were the first composers and representers of dramatic performances in England." On this supposition he founds a very ingenious conjecture, respecting the origin of the miracle-plays and the mysteries. "The clergy," says he, "were not content with abusing the minstrels, treating them with the utmost contumely, and refusing them the sacred communion and Christian burial; they desired, in addition to this, to rival them in their own arts. They wished to take away from the laity the very inclination to listen to them; and for this purpose they could think of no better expedient than to copy their amusements. This is probably the true reason why church-music was so assiduously cultivated in the early ages; for the clergy had the seals and the gleemen to contend with, before the appearance of the minstrels. No sooner then had the minstrels brought forward a new species of entertainment, the dramatic, than the clergy thought it high time that they too should have their plays." *Life of Chaucer. Lond. 1803. cb. vi.* Perhaps the origin of the sacred drama in Italy may be ascribed to the same cause.

Pag. 75. Note (3). It is the opinion of Mr. Ellis.] This opinion properly belongs to Mr. Warton; it has, however, been adopted by Mr. Ellis, and to him I have therefore ascribed it. The adoption of so elegant and so accurate an antiquary gives it considerable weight.

Pag. 75. Note (3). l. 4. *Fête des Fous, Fête de l'Âne*.] Of these burlesque festivals, a full and satisfactory account is given in a late valuable publication. Vid. *Life of Chaucer. Lond. 1803. cb. vii.*

In the account of the burlesque ceremonies referred to above, no mention is made of the HOBBY HORSE. From processions, this whimsical charac-

ter passed to the English stage. Vid. *Stevens's Shakespeare, Lond. 1793, vol. viii, p. 600, 601.* But I have not been able to discover it, at any period, upon the stage of Italy. It was probably rejected by the good taste of the Italians. To the Italians the character could not certainly be unknown. It must have met their observation in the south of France, as it has long, I believe, figured in processions in that gay region; a country with which Italy was once intimately connected. In the year 1791, I was present at the celebration of an ancient ceremony, attended with some modern circumstances, at Cuges, near Toulon, in which this character was introduced. It was a festival in honour of St. Barbe, the patron saint of the town. The order of the procession was as follows:—A priest carrying a small figure of the saint, accompanied by other priests, led. These were immediately followed by a company of hussars, armed with blunderbusses, which they fired every now and then. Then appeared six young men in hobby horses, clad in white, and decorated with ribbons. Twenty young men dressed in the same manner (but without horses) followed, attended by music. A detachment of the national guards closed the procession.

After the holy image was deposited in its sanctuary, the twenty young men, who constituted part of the procession, performed a martial dance in the market-place.

Page 76. Note (4). l. 11. A similar practice prevailed at the performance of Oratorios. As the oratorio has some affinity with the subject of this work, and as it originated about the period of which we treat, it demands at least a note. "The oratorio, a poetical composition," says Crescimbeni; "formerly a commixture of the dramatic and narrative styles, but now entirely a musical drama, had its origin from San Filippo Neri, who, in his chapel, after sermons and other devotions, in order to allure young people to pious offices, and to detain them from earthly pleasure, had hymns, psalms, and such like prayers, sung by one or more voices."—Filippo Neri was born at Florence in 1515. He was intended for a merchant by his parents; but their views were defeated by the powerful influence of his pious propensities. Betaking himself to study, and the exercise of devotion, he became an ecclesiastic, and at length founded the celebrated congregation of the Fathers of the Oratory. When Sir John Hawkins asserts that the Oratorio took its rise from the opera, (*vol. iii. p. 441.*) he seems to forget that San Filippo had long ceased to exist before the opera was invented, or at least perfected.

Page 82. l. 7. The "Barlaam e Josef," contains some passages that would not disgrace a more regular production.] Perhaps the author of this *rappresentazione* was indebted to a pious romance on the same subject by John of Damascus, who flourished in the eighth century. Vid. *Ritsch, Diss. on Rom. and Minf. prefixed to Ancient Eng. met. Rom. Lond. 1802, p. xxxiii.* Philip's story of the goose, in the prologue to the 4th day of the *Decamerone*, is taken from this romance. Vid. *Remarks on the Life and Writings of Boccaccio, prefixed to the English translation of the Decamerone, Lond. 1804.*

Page 90. Note (9). The Gallicanus of Hroswitha.] While Hroswitha was reviving the drama in Germany, plays were actually performing in Iceland. This appears from the following passage in a curious MS. in the British museum, entitled, *Landala Saga; or, the History of the County of Landadal in Iceland, during the tenth century.* Speaking of an annual market

held in the islands of Brenneyar, the author says, "The market was exceedingly numerous, and at the same time as splendid and attractive, every pause of business being filled with banqueting, interludes, plays, and a variety of other entertainments equally enchanting."

Page. 99. Note (1). l. 5. It is supposed by Mr. Warton.] It is with regret I feel myself obliged to dissent from the opinion of a writer whom I so warmly admire, and so highly respect, as the late Mr. Warton. It is perhaps the only literary topics upon which we entertain different opinions. Nor is it probable we should differ on the present occasion, if the nature of his enquiries had led him to the discovery of the evidence which convinced me.

It is but justice to Mr. Warton to observe, that we are indebted to this elegant writer for the first clear and comprehensive estimate of the characteristical manner of Spenser. *Obs. on the Fairy Queen*, 2 vols. Lond. 1762. But it was reserved for my friend, the Rev. H. J. Todd, to give a complete and perpetual comment on every part of that admired, but neglected, poet, with a faithful transcript of his genuine text.

Page. 109. l. 15. The "Scolastica." The account which Riccoboni gives of his unsuccessful attempt to revive this comedy, strongly evinces the fond partiality of the Italians for the *Orlando Furioso*. "Je pris," says he, "*la Scolastica*, j'en retranchai un moine en substituant à sa place un autre personnage; et en un mot avec cent cinquante vers que je changeai, je mis cette comédie en état de paroître sur le theatre sans blesser les mœurs; je la donnai à Venise pour le première fois, je n'oubliai point de parer mon affiche du nom de l'auteur: le seul nom de l'Arioste suffit pour attirer les spectateurs en foule, mais quel malheur imprévu! tous les assistants ignoroient que l'Arioste eût fait des comédies; avant de commencer on me rapporta que dans le parterre on parloit de la comédie qu'on alloit représenter comme d'une pièce tirée du *Roland furieux* du même auteur. Je me vis perdu; enfin la comédie commença, et n'y voyant point paroître Angelique, Roland, Bradamante, et les autres, le public en murmura dès la première scène, et après avoir essuïé toute la mauvaïse humeur d'un parterre ennuié, degouté, et fâché, je fus obligé de faire baisser la toile à la fin du quatrième acte. Je ne puis exprimer, quel fut mon chagrin, j'en pensai tomber malade, &c. tom. 1. p. 87.

Page. 111. l. 1. Cose vulgare del celeberrimo Messer Angelo Politiano, &c. printed at Venice in 1513.] The editor of the edition of the *Orfeo*, printed at Nizza, professes to have followed an edition printed at Florence in the same year, and subjoins some canzoni which are given after the *Orfeo* in that edition. But he omits a canzona given in the Venetian edition, beginning, "Io son costretto poi che vole amore." This is mentioned for the information of the future editor of the *Poesie* of Politiano.

Page. 111. Note (4). This edition, which was printed from the original MSS. discovered by P. Affò.] This is not the only obligation which elegant literature has to Padre Affò: he has published some historical and biographical works of great celebrity. Vid. *Smith's Sketch of a Tour on the Continent*, vol. iii. p. 26-31. in which several interesting personal anecdotes of the learned padre may be found.

Page. 112. La Festa de Orpheo.] Politiano was, I believe, the first

writer who dramatized the story of Orpheus and Eurydice; but it seems to have been a favourite subject with the writers of the metrical romance in the Gothic ages. Mr. Scott, in his curious and learned essay *On the Fairies of Popular Superstition*, (*Minst. of the Scottish Border*, vol. ii. p. 202-210.) gives a very interesting account of an old romance, entitled, *Orfeo and Heurodis*, which Mr. Ritson supposes to be a translation, or imitation, of a French romance on the same subject, and which, he observes, is a Gothic metamorphosis of the classical episode of Orpheus and Eurydice. *Anc. Eng. Met. Romances*, vol. iii. p. 332. In this tale, Eurydice is found asleep under a tree by the king of the fairies, who, struck with her beauty, transports her to Fairy-land, where she is found by Orpheus after a search of ten years. The bard, on discovering her, strikes his lyre. The king is charmed, and desires him to name his reward. He asks his wife, and obtains her. This romance, under the title of *Sir Orpheus*, is published entire by Mr. Ritson, *ibid.* vol. ii. On a passage in this romantic tale, Mr. Scott observes, "It was perhaps from such a description that Ariosto adopted his idea of the Lunar Paradise, containing every thing that on earth was stolen or lost." *Minst. of the Scot. Bord.* vol. ii. p. 208. In the *Complaynt of Scotland*, written so early as 1548, we find mention, amongst the "pleysand storeis," of *Opheus, king of Portingal*, which the learned and ingenious editor supposes should have been written Orpheus. *Diff.* p. 243.

Pag. 122. Note (5). If Sir Joshua Reynolds borrowed the idea from Politiano.] I hope some of the living artists, who do so much honour to England, may be induced to treat this subject with the simplicity it demands. I think Mr. Opie would do it justice.

Pag. 132. Coro di Menadi.] An ingenious friend has favoured me with the following admirable imitation of this chorus, in the manner of a modern drinking-song.

Come join in the revel, 'tis Bacchus that leads,
The moment invites to a general kick-up;
With the full cluster'd ivy adorn our gay heads,
We'll jig it away, and we'll quaff till we hiccup.

Let bumper on bumper your loyalty shew,
Till the sun and the moon in celestial amaze
Grow giddy, to see how the glasses below
Wheel round, like themselves, when they're dancing the heels.

Push about the brisk bowl, but remember the bard;—
My throat is as dry as a three-year-old biscuit,
Here goes supernaculum,—now I'm prepar'd,
O'er joint-stools, and tables, and benches, to frisk it.

O whirligig Nature!—my brain is a-spinning;
This, this is the way to be frolic and free;
How you stand there, like momes, when the dance is beginning!
Why cannot you caper and vapour like me?

But, alas! by St. Stingo, my lads it won't do,—
My head falls a-swimming,—I'm owlsh and tipsy,—
My huckle bones fail me,—and pray how are you?
Are you sober, pray tell me, or drunk as a gipsy?

I can't find my ancles,—my heels are quite fuddled,—
 Pray how is it with you, my jovial companions?
 O there you are lying, most gloriously muddled,
 True liege-men, and loyal to Bacchus' canons.

Yet reach me that cooper,—if yet ye can grope it,—
 We need not be idle while here we're reposing;
 While we lie on the floor, we shall gloriously tope it,—
 Come, box it about, it is better than dozing.

There!—take off your bumper, and join in a song,
 To Bacchus, gay Bacchus, the king of good fellows,
 For dozing, or drinking, to him we belong;
 Then blast up his praises with pipe and with bellows.

Hand round magnum bonum; how fain would I try
 To lead up the dance, but, alas! 'tis all over;
 Then all we can do, is to sing as we lie,
 To Bacchus our king who has lodged us in clover.

Pag. 135. l. 3. Afforded the first specimen of the dithyrambic ode in the Italian language.] Teobaldo Ceva erroneously ascribes the revival of this ode to Benedetto Fioretti, who flourished long after Politiano. Vid. his *Dissertatione* entitled *Del Ditirambo*, prefixed to the *Bacco in Tescana* di F. Redi. Lond. 1804.

Pag. 136. Note (2). Perhaps the Orfeo, &c.] While this work was passing through the press, I had the satisfaction to find the conjecture hazarded in the note to which I refer, sanctioned by the authority of the learned and ingenious biographer of the Scottish poets. Speaking of poetical echoes, Mr. Irving observes, "The practice of composing on this model, after it had been for a considerable time discontinued, was perhaps revived by the celebrated Politiano; who informs us (*Miscel. cap. xxii.*) that he wrote, in the Italian language, verses of this description which had been set to music." *Lives of the Scot. Poets*, vol. li. p. 200.

Pag. 139. Note (6). Luigi Pulci, in his *Morgante Maggiore*.] The long disputed point, whether the *Morgante Maggiore* be of a serious or a comic nature, is, I think, decided by the laugh excited in almost every page; but it would seem that the author had made considerable progress in his work before he had determined whether it should conclude happily or disastrously. See *Canto xxvii. St. 1. 2.* It would seem, too, that though he originally intended to make Morgante his hero, and had named the poem accordingly, he found it convenient to kill him in the twentieth canto. With wit and humour, Pulci was richly endowed; but his fancy does not appear to have been either rich or fertile,—particularly in his pastoral and architectural descriptions; few, indeed hardly any of which, present a picture to the imagination. Of his style, which the Italians praise, I am not competent to judge; but I am charmed with his wit, and shocked at his impiety. When we are told by the author (*Cant. xxvii. St. 132.*) that he was animated to his undertaking by Lucrezia Tornabuona, the mother of Lorenzo de Medici, does not her boasted piety become doubtful, and her *Lauds*, or spiritual hymns, lose something of the odour of sanctity?

The solemn manner in which each canto of the *Morgante Maggiore* opens, seems to be alluded to by Menzini in the following lines:

Nè mio avviso aver si debbe in uso
Che cominci ogni canto per sentenza,
Chè questo parmi un puerile abuso.

Dell' Art. Poet. It. cant. ii.

This passage will equally apply to the *Orl. Furioso*.

Pag. 140. Note (7). A late noble friend.] I allude to the late Earl of Charlemont, one of the most amiable and accomplished noblemen of his time. As he devoted many years of his life to the compilation of an history of Italian literature, his character might, with some propriety, have been given in these notes;—and as

I may proudly boast
That honour'd Caulfield deign'd to call me Friend,

it was my original intention to have indulged my feelings in a little tribute to his memory. But as I find his memory is about to receive justice at much more able hands, I gladly relinquish the idea.—A feeling and elegant *Monody* on the death of this venerated nobleman, by William Preston, esquire, has already appeared. *Vid. Poet. Reg. for 1802, p. 160-169.*

Pag. 146. l. 1. Though I have, with Riccoboni.] This is one of the few occasions on which I have had reason to doubt the authority, or question the judgment of Riccoboni. As an historian he was cautious, and, in general, remarkably correct; and Bishop Hurd only does justice to his critical talents when he says, that “though a mere player, he appears to have had juster notions of the drama, than the generality of even professed critics.” *Hor. vol. ii. p. 232.* Mr. Warton allows him to have been “an able judge.” *Hist. of Eng. Poet. vol. i. p. 38.* Dub. And M. Beauchamps gives the following account of this ingenious actor and author, in his history of the *Nouv. Theat. Ital. tom. iii. p. 258.* “Lelio, premier amoureux.—Il s'appella Luigi Riccoboni, il est de Modene, c'est un homme d'esprit, qui a fait plusieurs comédies, dont je parlerai dans la suite. Il a été chef de sa troupe jusqu' a sa sortie du théâtre, qu'il quitta en 1729, pour entrer au service du duc de Parme.” But the death of the duke happening soon after, Riccoboni and his wife, the celebrated Flaminia, entered again into the service of the French court. From Riccoboni's dedication to his *Obs. sur la Comed. Par. 1736*, it would seem that the duke of Parma had invited him to his court, for the purpose of assisting in his meditated reform of the Italian stage, and had actually invested him with the office of “Contrôleur General des menu plaisirs & Inspecteur des Theatres,” *p. vij.*

Pag. 160. last line. Suitable to comedy as a poem.] Menzini censures the practice of writing comedies in prose, and asserts that in this species of drama, verse should always be used.

Sempre coi casmi Poesia si sposa;
Nè questa può da loro esser disgiunta,
Qual per natura inseparbil cosa.

Dell' art Poet. Ital. cant. ii.

Pag. 165. l. 2. The restoration of the chorus to comedy would seem to be recommended by Horace.] Having frequently referred, in the

the course of this work, to Horace's *Art of Poetry*. I shall take this occasion to direct the notice of the reader to an Italian version of that admirable poem, which is, I believe, little, if at all, known in England. It is entitled *La Poetica di Q. Orazio Flacco, restituita all'ordine suo e tradotta in terzine. Con Prefazione Critica, e, Note*. Copies of this version were presented by the translator, Antonio Petrini, to Voltaire and Metastasio. With transcripts of their acknowledgments, (which have never, I believe, been printed), I was favoured by a friend in Rome. Voltaire's letter is worth transcribing. It is epigrammatic.

A Mons. Mons. Petrini, Avvocato, Roma.

MONSIEUR,

Au Chateau de Ferney, 5 Fbre 1777.

Ho sempre creduto, che l'arte Poetica di Orazio era, come Roma, tutta scompigliata dai Barbari, e per questa ragione io teneva il Boileau superiore al Flacco, perchè più regolare.

Oggi preferisco l'autore dell' arte in terze rime. Avete fatto cioè l'anno esequito i Pontifici; avete riedificato Roma.

Je vous remercie, Monsieur, et je suis tres veritablement,

Votre tres humble, & tres obeissant serviteur,

VOLTAIRE.

Pag. 172. Timone.] While I was employed on this analysis, I often reflected with pleasure on Shakespeare's delineation of the character of Timon, as exhibited by Mr. J. P. Kemble, an actor who unites to very superior talents in his profession, the manners and the information of the finished gentleman and the polite scholar.

Pag. 179. last line. Cyrus thus defines a freeman.] When Boyarda wrote this definition, he probably recollected a passage in Horace's *Satires*, lib. ii. Sat. 7. l. 82. beginning thus: *Quisnam igitur liber?* &c.

Pag. 187. note (4). The account of this investiture, by a modest and anonymous author, &c.] The *History of the house of Este* referred to in this note, was written by James Crawford, esquire, historiographer for Scotland. For this information I am indebted to the friendship of Dr. R. Anderson, and the politeness of Mr. Laing, the able historian of Scotland. In Sir Robert Sibbald's MS. Catalogue in the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh, the author is said to be "Crawford, a clergyman in England."

Pag. 193. l. 4. It was from Turpin he drew his subjects.] It is supposed by a living writer, that the romantic fabling of the early Italian epic poets was not entirely supplied by Turpin: he presumes that the poem of *Charlemagne* by Vincent de Viviers, a knight and troubadour of the 12th century, proved a more abundant source of such "*coglionerie*,"—to borrow the degrading term of a tasteless cardinal. This poem, says my authority, is "en vers de dix syllabes, où l'alternative des rimes est assez généralement observée." And he adds, that M. de Surville considered the author as "le précurseur de l'Arioste, qui lui doit beaucoup plus qu'à l'archevêque Turpin." *Vide* preface to *Poësies de Marg. Edmon. Clotilde, Poëte François du xv. siècle* Par. 1803. p. xxvj. As the poem in question has, I believe, escaped the notice of our most indefatigable literary antiquaries, I am inclined to doubt its existence,—as I certainly do the genuineness of the poems ascribed to Clotilde.

Pag. 194. note (6). For this version (of the *Orlando Innamorato*) we are indebted to Robert Tofte.] The accurate and ingenious Mr. Park, has restored to Tofte a translation of Ariosto's *Satyræ* printed in 1608, which has been long ascribed to Gervase Markham. *Bibliog. Poet. p. 274.*

Pag. 195. note (9). The first edition of this poem (the *Orlando Innamorato*) was printed in Scandiano 1496.] The best edition of this poem, that has been yet imparted by the press, was printed in Dublin about twenty-five years since, under the direction of Dr. Edward Hill, a learned physician of that city. No particular edition was followed by the erudite editor; but by the collation of several editions, all the corruptions of former editors were rectified, and the text regulated with anxious care. This valuable edition has never been published. Of the whole impression only five copies remain; the rest were destroyed by an accidental fire. But we shall have less reason to deplore this loss, if Signor G. Polidori should (as he once meditated) undertake an edition of this poem.

Pag. 197. note (8). Tiraboschi has preserved a very curious letter from Ercole I. to Francesco, marquis of Mantua.] A due attention to this letter would, perhaps, save the commentators on Shakespeare a great effusion of Christian ink, in fruitless endeavours to reconcile to probability the violations of the unities of time and place which occur so often in his plays, and in attempts equally vain to prove his ignorance of every language but his own, from the supposed incorrectness of his orthography. From this letter it appears, that it was a practice on the stage of Ferrara in the time of Hercules I. to break up the original MS. of the piece intended for representation, and distribute to the several actors, in loose sheets, their respective parts; in consequence of which many sheets of the copy were lost, and the pieces of course became mutilated and defective. A similar practice attended, probably, with similar consequences, seems to have prevailed on the English stage in the time of Shakespeare. "Shakespeare himself," says Dr. Farmer, "published nothing in the drama: when he left the stage, his copies remained with his fellow managers, Heminge and Condell, who, at their retirement, about seven years after the death of their author, gave the world the edition now known by the name of the first folio. This edition," he continues, "was printed from the play-house copies; which, in a series of years, had been frequently altered through convenience, caprice, or ignorance." Now, is it not doing great injustice to the memory of Shakespeare, to ascribe to him the false orthography, and passages bordering on nonsense, which so often occur in plays published from copies which had "been frequently altered through convenience, caprice, or ignorance?" Is it not equally unjust to accuse him of gross violations of the unities of time and place, which probably originated in the alterations, transpositions, and interpolations, made by his editors? Presuming that the fame of our immortal bard has suffered from such causes, his admirers should feel grateful to my friend Isaac Ambrose Eccles, esquire, for his bold, often successful, and always ingenious, attempt, in his edition of *Lear* and *Cymbeline*, "to mark with clearness the progression of the fable, and trace the connections of its several parts with, and dependence upon, each other, so as that they may appear to constitute one consistent whole, and that chiefly with a reference to the circumstances of time and place." *Vide* preface to *The plays of Lear and*

Cymbeline. Dub. 1793. If the attempt of my friend stood in need of further justification, a note by Dr. Johnson on sc. 4. act. II. of *King Richard II.* would afford it. "Here," says he, "is a scene so unartfully and irregularly thrust into an improper place, that I cannot but suspect it accidentally transposed; which, when the scenes were written on single pages, might easily happen in the wildness of Shakespeare's drama." *Steevens's Shakespeare, vol. viii. p. 265.*

Pag. 214. note (3). Titian, who seems to have delighted in such subjects.] Having had more than one occasion to mention Titian, I hope it will not be thought irrelevant if I should supply, in this place, an omission with which all the biographers of that enchanting artist are chargeable,—I mean the inscription on his tomb-stone, which I copied on the spot in 1792. Vasari does not give this inscription; and De la Lande says, "le Titien est enterré sans épitaphe." *Voy. en It. tom. viii. p. 412.* The reader need not be told that Titian was interred in the church of I Frari in Venice. On the flag which covers his grave are the following lines

Qui giace il gran Tiziano di Uccelli,
Emulator de' Zeusi e degli Apelli.

Pag. 250. note (2). Niccolò Barbieri was the most celebrated Beltrame of his day.] Quadrio's account of this actor is too interesting to be omitted. "Niccolò Barbieri, detto in Commedia Beltrame, Veronese di patria, com'è scritto nella sua *Supplica*, fu creato da Lodovico XIII. Re di Franza, Soldato della sua propria Guardia, e ad ogni onore abilitato per la sua eccellenza. Rimaso privo di Claudia sua moglie, che presa aveva non d'altre doti fornita, che delle sue femminili virtù, quand'egli era in età di 31 anno, non volle a seconde nozze passare; ma visse in istato vedovile con fama di molta pudicizia, fino all'anno 1641, sessantesimo quinto dell'età sua, nel quale finì di vivere in Modena. Un suo congiuntissimo, che stette con lui dieci anni, attestava di non l'aver mai udito dire alcuna parola oscena, nè fare alcun atto scencio. Anzi non sofferiva di avere nella sua compagnia de' Comici, che non fossero modesti, e savj, a tal segno, che questi, come segnalatissimo per onestà, il facevano guardiano delle loro mogli, e delle loro figliuole. Nè gli mancarono occasioni di mostrare la sua virtù; poiché narrasi, che fu da femmine audaci assalito suo nel proprio letto, dalle quali però con bel garbo si liberò, senza scapito alcuno della sua castità, tal che niuno mai potè opporgli un minimo neo d'impurezza. Oltre questa pudicizia da lui osservata, non pure nella privata sua vita; ma in ogni suo recitamento, che non volle mai fare ne' giorni festivi, o ne' venerdì, fu altresì liberale verso i poveri a segno, che per ajutare certe fanciulle pericolanti, e per sovvenire a bisogni di molti altri, dagl'incendii del Vesuvio in Napoli, dove si ritrovava, danneggiati, egli giunse quasi a termine di povertà. Nell'educare poi i figliuoli fu sì vigilante, e dirò rigoroso, che per una semplice paroletta immodesta, che sentì dire a suo tenero fanciulletto, il castigò fino al sangue. Compiacquesi Iddio di questa sua attenzione, e avendogli dati di Claudia due figliuoli, un maschio, e una femmina, amendue gli elesse a servirlo, quegli nella chiara Religione di S. Domenico, e questa nel monistero di S. Agostino in Ferrara. *Nella Stor. d'ogni Poet. tom. v. p. 232.*

Page 253. L. 10. Goldoni, in the comic system which he endeavoured to establish.] The fate of this amiable and ingenious man was truly melancholy. It exacts the tribute of a tear from every lover of the drama. In the minutes of the proceedings of the National Convention, we find the following report:

NATIONAL CONVENTION.—*Thursday, February 7, 1793.*

“Chenier, in the name of the Committee of public instruction,—‘It was through pride that kings encouraged learning. Free nations ought to support it from gratitude, justice, and sound policy. I appear here in the name of your committee, to interest the national glory in the fate of an old foreigner, a celebrated man of letters, who, for thirty years, has considered France as his country, and whose talents and virtues have merited him the esteem of Europe. Goldoni, that excellent moralist and author, whom Voltaire called the Italian Moliere, was invited to Paris in 1762 by the ancient government. Since 1768, he enjoyed an annual pension of 4000 livres; and this pension, which was his sole dependence, was paid to him lately from the funds of the civil list. Since July last, he has received nothing: and one of your decrees has just now reduced this veteran of eighty-six, who has deserved well of France and of Italy, by his writings, to a state of indigence. He has no resources but in the goodness of a nephew, who shares with him the produce of his daily labour. He is ready to drop into the grave through poverty and infirmities; but he will bless Heaven that he dies a French citizen and republican. I propose, therefore, the following plan of a decree:

“The National Convention, after having heard their committee of instruction, decree,

“I. The annual pension of 4000 livres granted to Goldoni in 1768, shall be paid to him in future from the national treasury.

“II. The arrears due to him since July last shall be immediately paid to his order.”—*Adopted.*

On the 9th, Chenier informed the Assembly, that at the very moment when he was soliciting their beneficence for the unfortunate Goldoni, that illustrious old man was no more! He demanded, that a pension might be granted to his widow.

A decree was accordingly passed, that a pension should be granted to her of 1200 livres; and that what was due of her husband's pension should be paid immediately upon her demand.”

APPENDIX.

Nº. I.

ORIGIN OF THE CHARACTER OF ARLECCHINO.

Vid. pag. 4. note (2.)

QUADRIO, having displayed a profusion of learning, in refuting the opinions of various writers on the etymology of the word **ZANMI**, thus proceeds to offer his own conjectures.

“ Dico adunque, che la voce Zanini è a noi derivata originalmente dal Greco *Sannos* (*σάννος*), voce da Cratino, e da altri Greci usata, a significare uno stolto, o scempio, dalla quale trassero i Latini Comici la lor voce *Sannio*, e *Sannius*, come intese di dire Nonnio Marcello, così scrivendo: ‘ I Sannioni sono così detti da’ Sanni, i quali sono stolti ne’ lor parlari, e ne’ costumi, e nelle figure, i quali i Greci chiamano Mori, cioè Sciocchi.’ Alcuni quelle parole *Sanniones dicuntur a Sannis* interpretarono, quasi se avesse voluto dire, che i Sannioni sono così nomati dalle Sanne; ma malamente: perciocchè sebbene egli soggiunge, *quos Moros vocant Greci* che i Greci chiamano Mori, egli tuttavia non inteso altro dire edn le dette parole, se non che i Greci più comunemente a que’

tempi li chiamavano Mori, essendo il vocabolo Sannos affai rade volte adoprato. Altrimenti egli non avrebbe ben detto, soggiungendo alle parole, *Disuntur a Sannia*, quell' altre, *Qui sunt in diſtis fatui*, che *sono scempi ne' loro detti*: perciocchè chi vuole la voce Sannio derivata da Sanna, ne allega quasi ragione il mostrare, che costoro fanno irridendo le Sanne, onde avrebbe sì detto, 'che sono derisori,' o cose simili; non 'che sono scempi e stolti.' Sebbene quel soggiungere alla voce Sannis la voce Fatui, e' ci ha apertamente a conoscere ch' egli la nostra interpretazione intendeva. E perchè appunto questi Scempi, e Stolti fanno con le lor posture, aspetti, e gesti, mille morſie, onde muovere il riso, disse però ottimamente, Tullio (*Lib. 2. de Orat. n. 61*), così scrivendo: 'E che ci può essere tanto ridicolo, quanto un Sannione, il quale con la bocca, col volto, con imitare i movimenti, con la voce, finalmente con tutto il corpo è motivo di riso?' Ma questa voce Sannos divenne affai frequentata ne' secoli barbari, allora che i Mimi sopra tutte l'altre Drammatiche Poesie riportaron la palma. Non più però Sannos si pronunziava da que' Greci Mimi, de' quali non pur la Grecia, ma d' Italia tutta era gremita: ma cominciarono a dire Zannos, come testifica il predetto Menagio, appoggiato altresì dall' autorità del Salmasio. E come uso fu pur de' Latini, e de' Greci Barbari il lasciare la S, e tenerla nel fine delle parole; di Zannos ne fecero Zanno finchè per corruzione mutandosi l'O in I ne fu fatto Zanni. Anzi da Eustazio apertamente si trae, che già tali comiei personaggi a suoi tempi si chiamavano Tizani, per la pronunzia, ed uso de' Greci bassi.

“Che se noi vogliamo esaminare più a minuto il personaggio del Zanni, gli abiti suoi a buon conto non sono stati giammai giusta la moda d'alcuna Nazione usati; non essendo, che pezze di drappi rossi, turchini, violetti, e gialli, tagliate in triangolo; e l'una appresso all' altra affestate dall' alto fino al basso; un piccolo cappelluccio, che appena gli copre la testa

rasa; un pajo di picciole scarpette senza suola; e una maschera negra, e smunta, che non ha punto d'occhj, ma solamente due fori assai piccioli per vedere. Non ci lasciano adunque sì fatte vestimente dubitare, che non sia l'odierno Zanni uno in fatti di que' presci Mimi, che Planipedi erano nominati. In quel suo abito, e pezze di varii colori tagliato, eccovi quel Centuncolo, di cui sopra parlammo con Apulejo. In quella maschera negra, eccovi il Volto tutto di nera fuligne coperto, e vestito. In quel portare, che fa, i capegli sotto una cuffia rinvolti, eccovi il capo rasò significato, che aver dovevano i Planipedi. In quelle scarpette senza suola, eccovi l'andare, che facevano quegli in iscena co' piedi scalzi. In quegli schiaffi, e scapezzoni, che gli sono per trastullo frequentemente replicati dal padrone in Commedia, eccovi quell' avvillimento, a che erano sotto posti. Nel debito di ARLECCHINO di far con la bocca, co' gesti, col viso, con la voce, e co' movimenti del corpo ridere gli spettatori, eccovi l'affuccio de' Sanniosi, o de' Mimi, descrittoci sopra da Tullio. Finalmente il carattere, che le Italiane Commedie de' secoli scorsi diedero a loro Zanni, fu sempre tutt' uno con quello de' Latini, e de' Greci Zanni, cioè il carattere d'un balordo, e d'un ghiotto. E' il vero che siccome le cose si vanno talvolta a genio delle nazioni variando; così di tal personaggio è avvenuto, che la natura ne sia in oggi alquanto alterata: piòchè essendo i Francesi portati per loro indole alla vivacità, è loro piaciuto di veder dato al medesimo un poco più di spinto. Quindi alcuni sono passati in questi ultimi anni, a farlo fino parlar dottamente, e a farlo inoltre moralizzare. Ma ciò tuttavia è alieno dal suo convenevol carattere." *Della Stor. e della rag. d'ogn. Poes. tom. v. 212-214.* As this passage abounds in curious matter, I shall not offer any apology for the length of the quotation: nor shall I trespass further on the reader. I shall only observe, that this subject has been treated fully by Riccoboni, and ingeniously by Mr. Pinkerton. *Hist. du Th. It. ch. 1. 11. Lett. of Lit. let. xxix.*

Nº. II.

ON THE ANTIQUITY OF THE CHARACTER OF PULLICINELLA.

Vid. pag. 5. note (4.)

I SHALL again have recourse to the patient and indefatigable Quadrio, whose valuable work is become extremely rare, and not likely to be reprinted.

“ La Maschera altresì del Pullicinella troviamo antichissima essere: poichè nel museo del marchese Alessandro Gregorio Capponi un istrione così mascherato si trova, con un camiciotto mal affestato, e assai goffo, con una fanna a ciascun de' due angoli della bocca, cogli occhi tralunati, col naso lungo, prominente, ed adunco, colla gobba e nel petto, e nel dorso, e coi focchi a piedi. Nè il carattere stesso del personaggio è dissomigliante da quello, che a coloro davan gli antiche, che chiamavano in lingua Osca *Macchi*, cioè Uomini Stolidi, accomodati coll' abito, colle parole, e col gesto, a mover le risa, de' quali nelle Atellane diremo. Anzi lo stesso nome di Pullicinella è per ventura derivato dalla voce latina *Pulliceno* colla quale Sparziano appella il Pullo Gallinaceo; perciocchè i Pullicinelli imitano col naso prominente, ed adunco, il rostro de' polli. Col decadere però delle antiche usanza dove questa Maschera perderfi per qualche tempo, e andarè in disuso. Ma Silvio Fiorillo considerate le qualità del medesimo, il restitui a

teatri, e il dialetto gli diede de' Calabresi. Dopo il che, prendendolo a rappresentare Andrea Calcese, detto Ciuccio per soprannome, il quale fu fartore, e morì nella peste dell' anno 1636; collo studio, e natural grazia molto v'aggiunse, e il perfezionò, imitando i villani dell' Acerra, città antichissima di terra di Lavoro, poco distante da Napoli." v. p. 220.

An engraving of the figure to which Quadrio alludes may be found at the end of this appendix. The inscription on the base of the pedestal which supports this figure, recording its discovery, is given at full length, in the *Hist. du Tb. Ital.* tom. ii. p. 316, by Riccoboni, who has subjoined some ingenious conjectures on the origin of the character.

This character, which is well known as the hero of puppet-shows, under the name of PUNCH, is thought to exhibit the entire character of the Old Vice of the early English stage. Vid. *Hawkins' Origin of the English drama* (vol. i. pref. p. ix), a publication which may be considered as an excellent model for all works of a similar nature.

N^o. III.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FÊTE ON THE ARNO IN 1304.

Vid. pag. 6.

I SHALL borrow from a note on the *Introduction* to my *Historical Memoir on Italian Tragedy*, (p. 2.) a description of this fête, which I shall give without variation. It may be observed that I have, in a few other instances, taken the same liberty with particular passages, in that part of my former work, warranted by the consideration of its being the embryo of the present essay. After a reference to *Vasari, Vite de' Pittori*, tom. i. p. 385, the note proceeds:

This exhibition, at which we find the spectators

embarking

For the fiery gulph of hell,

is fully described by Ammirato, whose words I shall transcribe. " Mentre secondo l'usanza delle Feste, che si solevano celebrare à kalen di maggio quelli di borgo san Friano. (in Florence) con pazza invenzione promettono per il lor banditore di dar novelle dell' altro mondo à chi si fosse ragunato in sul ponte alla Carraia, il popolo in tanta calca vi trasse à vedere, stupido in mirare i lavorati fuochi, e la spaventosa immagine dell' Inferno, et quelli che in figura d'anime ignude à contrafatti demonii erano compartiti, e in udire le grandissime grida, e urli che gittavano per le diverse pene e martirii, à quali

pareano condannati, cose tutte rappresentate sopra barche, e navicelli, che erano nel fiume, che il ponte, che in quel tempo era di legname non potendo regger, al gran peso che sostenea, cadde con tutta la gente ch' v'era sopra, e molti vi morirono, parte annegati nel fiume, e parte oppressi da coloro, che erano ultimi à cadere, de quali pochi furono quegli, che scamparono la morte, che guasti d'alcun membro o storpiati non rimanessero." *Id. Fior. ed. 1603. p. 168.* This exhibition reminds

Mr. Roscoe of the *Harrowing of hell* mentioned by Chaucer. *Life of Lorenzo de' Medici, vol. i. p. 229.* And it is said by Denina, to have given birth to the *Commedia* of Dante; (*Vicende della Letteratura, Part ii. sect. 10. ed. Ven. 1788*) an opinion which is combated by M. Merian in his excellent *Memoire sur Dante*,—"On prétendu que ce spectacle donna l'idée de son poëme à Dante, qui cependant ne peut y avoir allisté. Il étoit depuis trois ans exilé de Florence; et vraisemblablement sa *Divine-Comédie* fut commencée avant la représentation de cette tragédie infernale; peut-être même le fut-elle avant son exil." *Mém. de l'Acad. roy. des Scien. et Belles Lett. (of Berlin) for 1784, p. 451.*

Of the *Harrowing of Hell*, mentioned above, a curious account may be found in Ritson's *Anc. Eng. Metrical Romances*, vol. iii. p. 349. See also *Tyrwhitt's Chaucer, vol. iv. p. 243.*

Nº. IV.

ON THE GHOSTS OF THE ITALIAN STAGE.

Vid. pag. 39. note (7.)

IN speaking of the ghosts or supernatural beings of the Italian stage, I have elsewhere observed, that "the powers of the Italian dramatists seem to forsake them when they enter the *magic circle*." In the manners and language of their preternatural beings there is nothing characteristic, no mysterious solemnity; they seem neither

Spirits of health, nor goblins damn'd!

They retain all their humanity about them, and are only ghosts in name." *Hist. Mem. on Ital. Trag.* p. 110. When I made this observation I had not read the *Progne* of Corrado. But I had read the *Acripanda*, and admitted it as an exception. Still I think the Italian (dramatic) ghosts are, in general, obnoxious to criticism. They are, in every respect, beings of this world. My limited reading does not afford me an exception among the early Italian dramatists to add to the two which I have made. Yet Ingegneri supplied his countrymen with rules for the composition and demeanour of a ghost (if may so express myself) so early as 1594. The passage is curious, and perhaps deserves more attention than seems to have been bestowed upon the valuable little treatise in which it may

he found. *Della Poesia rappresent. e del modo di rappres. le favole sceniche. Discorso di Ang. Ingegneri. Fir. 1734, p. 107-108.*

If the spirit, says he, be not already upon the stage when the curtain rises, it should enter at the far end, behind a thin black veil, which should wear the semblance, or give the idea, of a dark cloud, or dense body of air, such as may be supposed to involve an inhabitant of the infernal regions during its transitory stay upon earth. Through this veil the shade should be seen in perpetual motion; for, in his opinion, a ghost should never stand still. The dress, or drapery, he would recommend, is black taffety or farset, which should fall over, and conceal, the face, hands, and feet; so that the figure would appear a formless form,—*una cosa informe*. The tones of the voice should be loud, hoarse, hollow, and monotonous. And the evanishing, or instantaneous disappearance, ought to be immediately followed by the sudden consumption, by fire, of the black veil; so that the ghost would seem to sink in flames to its infernal abode, a circumstance that would serve to heighten the terror which such appearances are intended to inspire. But there is something so truly sublime in the descriptive part of the passage, of which I have endeavoured to give a general idea, that I am tempted to transcribe the author's words. "L'ombra," says he, "doverebbe esser tutta coperta, più che vestita, di zendale; over altra cosa simile, pur di color nero, e non mostrar nè volto, nè mani, nè piedi, e sembrare in sommo una cosa informe, movendosi più tosto sopra un piccole ruote, che mutando i passi, over camminando ordinariamente." He proceeds,—“E quanto al parlare, aver una voce alta, e rimbombante, ma ruvida, ed aspra, e in conclusione orribile, e non naturale, serbando quasi sempre un' istesso tuono.” To make any thing very terrible, says Burke, obscurity seems in general to be necessary. This didactic remark seems to be exemplified in the passage which I have just quoted: indeed

on this occasion the preceptive writer rises into the poet, and kindling his imagination at the sacred flame of holy writ, bodies forth the sublime vision of Job. Part of the foregoing description, but particularly the words, *una cosa inferna*, will naturally remind the reader of the following lines in *Book ii. of Par. Lost*.

The other shape,

If shape it might be called that shape had none,

Distinguishable, in member, joint, or limb;

Or substance might be called that shadow seem'd,

For each seem'd either; black he stood as night, &c.

Though Ingegneri's treatise is now little known, it probably fell within the extensive range of Milton's reading.

But to return. It was a practice, I will not say a peculiarity, of the early Italian dramatists to evoke the spirits of departed poets, and invest them with the office of protatic personage. The prologue to the *Timone* of Bojardo, is delivered by Lucian, and that of the *Alcina* of Testi, by Ariosto. Contarini seems to have introduced Petrarca in the scene with more propriety than either of those dramatists. He employs him to recite the prologue to his *Fida Ninfa* (*Vic. 1595*), the scene of which is laid near the tomb of Petrarca, among the mountains of Arquà, the place of his birth. When a ghost appears, the marvellous becomes probable. We are not, therefore, surprised at finding Petrarca addressing Contarini's patron, Ferdinand, grand-duke of Florence, at the conclusion of the prologue.

E voi, gran Ferdinando,

Che di quà co'l pensier presente io veggio,

Grande di nome, e d'alma invitto, e grande

D'opere grande, &c.

Nº. V.

SCENE FROM THE MANDRAGOLA OF MACHIAVELLI.

Vid. pag. 61. note (7.)

I HAVE been induced to give a place in my Appendix to the following scene in the *Mandragola*, by the striking resemblance which it bears to scene 8, act iii, of the *Double Dealer* of Congreve. There seems too to be a strong affinity between the heroes of the respective comedies. I do not, however, mean to accuse Congreve of plagiarism. As he is not said to have cultivated Italian literature, it is probable he was unacquainted even with the existence of the *Mandragola*. But when he looked through life for a character fitted for the exercise of his comic powers, he selected that of a dupe. And as nature is everywhere the same, the resemblance between Sir Paul Plyant, and Messer Nicia, only serves to shew, that each poet was faithful to his original.

MANDRAGOLA,

Acto ii, sc. 2.

Callimaco, Messer Nicia, Ligurio.

Cal. Che è quello chi mi vuole?

Nic. Bona dies domine magister.

Cal. Et vobis domine doctor.

Lig. Che vi pare?

Nic. Bene all' eguaglie.

Lig. Se voi volete ch'io stia qui con voi, voi parlate in modo che io v'intenda, altrimenti noi faremo duoi fuochi.

Cal. Che buone facende?

Nic. Che so io. Vo cercando due cose, che un' altro per-
avventura fuggirebbe; questo è, di dare briga à me, et ad altri.
Io no ho figliuoli, et vorenne, e per haver questa briga vengo
à dare impaccio à voi.

Cal. A me non stia mai discaro fare piacere à voi, et a tutti
gli huomini virtuosi e da bene, come voi sete, e non mi son à
Parigi affaticato tanti anni per imparare per altro, se non per
poter servire à vostri pari.

Nic. Gran mercie, e quando voi haveffi bisogno dell' arte
mia, io vi servire i volentieri. Ma torniamo ad rem nostram.
Havete voi pensato che bagno fussi buona à disporre la donna
mia ad impregnare, ch'io so che Ligurio vi ha detta quella che
vi si habbia detto.

Cal. Egli è la verità; ma à voler adempire il desiderio
vostro, è necessario sapere la cagione della sterilità della donna
vostre, perche le possono essere più cagioni; nam causæ sterili-
tatis sunt, aut in * * * * * aut in causa extrinseca.

Nic. Costui è il più degno huomo che si possa trovare.

Cal. Potrebbe oltra di questo causarla questa sterilità da
voi per imp——tia; e quando questo fusse non ci sarebbe ri-
medio alcuno.

Nic. Imp——te io? oh voi mi farete ridere. Io non credo
che sia il più serigno, et il più rubizzo huomo in Firenze,
di me.

Cal. Se cotesto non è, state di buona voglia, che noi vi trou-
veremo qualche rimedio.

Nic. Sarebbecci egli altro rimedio che bagni? perch' io non

vorrei quel disagio, e la donna uscirebbe di Firenze mal volontieri.

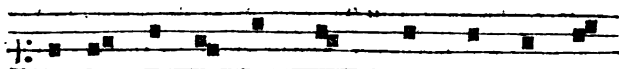
Lig. Si farà, io vo risponder io. Callimaco è tanto rispettivo, che è troppo. Non mi havete voi detto di sapere ordinar certa portione che indubitatamente farà ingravidar?

As the remainder of this indecent scene is not perfectly in point, I shall omit it. The fastidious reader will, perhaps, think I have given too much. But it will be found, that I have either mutilated, or disguised, such passages as would be likely to excite a blush on the cheeks of my fair readers. Indeed I would have wholly omitted the scene, and have simply referred to it, if the *Mandragola* was not a drama of rare occurrence, at least in England.

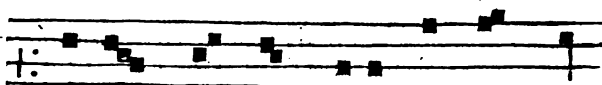
ALTHOUGH the *Mandragola* is incidentally noticed in the present essay, I shall close this article with some strictures on that comedy by M. Tenhove. "The *Mandragola*," says he, "is certainly the first production of the kind since the days of Terence, with great strokes of nature, great humour, perfectly descriptive of Italian manners, especially of those of its own times, and painting, with great strength, all the author wished to represent. Yet the action is so extremely licentious as to be intolerable in our more refined age, and what the comedian would blush to represent, the audience would not suffer to be exhibited." *Memoirs of the House of Medici*, vol. ii, p. 74. Two scenes from this comedy, translated in the true spirit of the original, may be found in the valuable work to which I refer.

In order to afford an idea of the music which enlivened the sacred dramas of the fifteenth century, I shall here insert, in its original notation, a hymn from the collection of *Laude Spirituale* in the Magliabecchi library mentioned above.

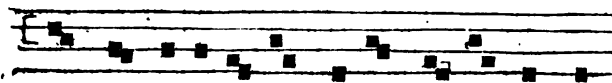
ALLA TRINITA.



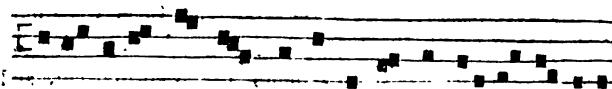
A — lla Tri — ni — tà be — a — ta da — noi



Sem — pre A — do — ra — ta Tri — ni — tà



Glo — ri — o — fa u — ni — tà me — ra — vi — gli — o — fa



Tu Eri manna sa — po — ro — fa E tutt 'or de — fi — de — ro — fa.

The foregoing hymn, reduced to modern notation, may be found in Dr. Burney's *Hist. of Music*, vol. ii. p. 328.

I shall close this article with a translation, by my friend Mr. Boyd, of a Lauda by the pious mother of the celebrated Lorenzo de' Medici.

LAUDA, OR SPIRITUAL SONG.

To the air of *O Gesù dolze o infinito amore.*

Contempla le mie pene, o Peccatore !
E nel martir, ch' i' sono ;
Vedi, ch' i' non perdono
A mè, che pendo in Croce per tuo amore, &c.

O sinful sons of men ! behold my pangs ;—
See what the chosen Man for you endures ;
Deep loaded with your crime, aloft he hangs,
And self-condemn'd for you, your peace secures.

O think what glories I resign'd for you,
Drawn by compassion from the heavenly sphere
For you suspended o'er the savage crew,
The piercing nails I feel, and rending spear.

Unmeasured was my love, that freely chose
Such tortures for your sake to undergo,
That I the gate of glory might uncloze,
And lead you where eternal pleasures grow.

The gory diadem that binds my brows,
See ! how its spiky texture wounds my head ;—
See ! how my life at five large currents flows,
And for a moment's ease in vain I plead.

While for the cool exhilarating draught,
A bitter beverage my parch'd lips awaits ;
Can these dire pangs by sinners be forgot,
These pangs I suffer'd to revenge your fates ?

The Sinner speaks.

O no, thou suffering Saviour! not in vain
 May thy sharp suffering on my memory dwell;
 For us you bore the fierce extremes of pain;
 For us in torture bade the world farewell.

Your pains with sympathizing heart I feel,
 And Faith springs up in sorrow's holy dew.
 O may the sun of righteousness reveal
 Pardon and Grace, and my laps'd powers renew.

A judicious selection of these Laude, translated with elegance and with spirit, could not fail of being acceptable to the public. Such a selection would certainly be more gratifying to readers of taste, and not less serviceable to the cause of religion, than the vapid compositions, under the name of Hymns, which are daily poured from the press by pious sectaries.

On the subject of Laude, Crescimbeni is, as usual, very satisfactory. Vid. *Comm. Petici, Lond. 1803, vol. ii. lib. iii. c. 22.*

N°. VII.

PROEMIO

DELLA RAPPRESENTAZIONE DI SAN GIOVANNI E PAULO,

Nell' edizione di Ser Francesco Buonaccorsi.

Vid. pag. 84. note (6)

MOLTI amici sitibundi di leggere composizioni, che scrivono parole di Dio beneditto, essendo di Dio; siccome è scritto : *Che è di Dio non invito ode le sue parole.* Con ogni dunque studio, diligenza, e grazia orandomi, che dia loro opportunità di fruire, quello che 'l nostro Magnifico Laurenzio de' Medici in Rima egregja à cattolicamente scritta *ab Agnetis secundo*; cioè, cominciando da' miraculi di Santa Agnesa, come sanò dalla lebbra Constanza, figliuola del Magno Constantino; seguitando la vittoria dello strenuo Gallicano, la sua conversione; la morte d'esso Magno Constantino; la successione del pessimo Constanzio Arriano; la elezione di Giuliano Apostata; e'l martirio de' nobili cavalieri di Cristo, Giovanni e Paulo. *Ultimo loco* la vituperosa morte del dannato Apostata Giuliano. Onde volendo a ognuno in Cristo gratificare, ò fatto fidelmente tutto imprimere. Innanzi a ogni cosa pregandori; che se errore alcuno trovate nella impressa opera, quello non ascriviate alle occupazioni del nostro Magnifico Laurenzio; *Sed* indubi-

tatamente lo imputate allo Impressore ; perocchè chj è solerte, che significa *in omni re* prudente, in nessuno tempo è occupato : ma occupato è sempre chj non n'è solerte ; cjoè occorto, diligente, et in ogni azzione risoluto. Mai è meno nigoziofo, che quando è senza occupazioni terrene.

Departing from my original purpose, expressed in *note (6)* p. 84, I have followed the edition of Cionacci (1680) instead of the black-letter copy, in the above transcript.

Nº. VIII.

ON THE ORIGIN OF PAGEANTS.

Vid. pag. 99.

IN order to discover the origin of Pageants, we should, perhaps, direct our notice to the East,—the cradle of Allegory. From the East, I am inclined to think, the Florentines borrowed the idea,—an idea on which, with their usual ability and richness of fancy, they certainly improved. But if this subject were deeply investigated, it would probably be found, that the species of spectacle under consideration prevailed in other commercial cities of Italy, and perhaps elsewhere, at a period as early, if not earlier, than in Florence. It seems to have originated (at least in modern times) in a pious respect for the patron saints of the several guilds, or corporations, of trading cities. Of this nature were the Franchises of Dublin, which may be traced up to the fifteenth century, and which continued to perambulate, triennially, the bounds of the city till 1772. (*Vid. Hist. Eff. on the Irish stage. Trans. of the Roy. Irish Acad. vol. ii*). It appears from the Letters of Lady Mary W. Montagu, that processions, of the nature of those in question, were exhibited in Constantinople when her ladyship visited that city in 1717 ; and as the Turks are ob-

stinately tenacious of old customs, it may be presumed that the exhibition which she describes was of high antiquity: indeed traces of the pagan rites of the Greeks may be discovered in it. As Lady Mary can never be tedious, I shall transcribe the passage. She is describing the procession of the several corporations to the palace of the grand-signior in order to present their contributions to assist in carrying on the war, which was then about to commence. "The procession," says she, "was preceded by an effendi, mounted on a camel, richly furnished, reading aloud the alcoran, finely bound, laid upon a cushion. He was surrounded by a parcel of boys, in white, singing some verses of it, followed by a man dressed in green boughs, representing a clean husbandman sowing seed. After him several reapers, with garlands of ears of corn, as Ceres is pictured, with scythes in their hands, seeming to mow. Then a little machine drawn by oxen, in which was a windmill, and boys employed in grinding corn, followed by another machine, drawn by buffaloes, carrying an oven, and two more boys, one employed in kneading the bread, and another in drawing it out of the oven. These boys threw little cakes on both sides among the crowd, and were followed by the whole company of bakers, marching on foot, two by two, in their best clothes, with cakes, loaves, pasties, and pies, of all sorts, on their heads; and after them, two buffoons, or jack-puddings, with their faces and clothes smeared with meal, who diverted the mob with their antic gestures. In the same manner followed all the companies of trade in the empire; the nobler sort, such as jewellers, mercers, &c. finely mounted, and many of the pageants that represent their trades perfectly magnificent; among which, that of the furriers made one of the best figures, being a very large machine, set round with the skins of ermines, foxes, &c. so well stuffed, that the animals seemed to be alive, and followed by music and dancers." (*Works of the*

right *ble Lady M. W. Montagu. Lond. 1803, vol. ii. p. 252-254*). If we compare this procession with the Florentine pageants, we may discover an affinity, if not a perfect resemblance. Nor is it unlikely that Florence, and other trading cities of Italy, borrowed the idea from the Turks, during their commercial intercourse with Constantinople. We might perhaps trace its origin to a more remote period: it would not be an extravagant conjecture to suppose, that pageants were introduced into Europe, with other oriental customs, at the time of the crusades: it is, at least, certain that some of the processional exhibitions of the Florentines were conceived in the romantic spirit of chivalry. Vafari, speaking of such processions, says: "It was certainly an extraordinary sight to observe, in the gloom of night, twenty or thirty couple of horsemen, most richly dressed in appropriate characters, with six or eight attendants upon each, habited in an uniform manner, and carrying torches to the amount of several hundreds, after whom usually followed a triumphal car with the trophies and spoils of victory." (*Vita di Piero di Cosimo*). "Prior to the time of Lorenzo de' Medici," says Mr. Roscoe, "these exhibitions were calculated merely to amuse the eye, or were at most accompanied by the insipid madrigals of the populace. It was he who first taught his countrymen to dignify them with sentiment, and add to their poignancy by the charms of poetry." (*Life of Lorenzo de' Medici, vol. i. p. 305*). These exhibitions, thus improved, were, as we have already observed, (*p. 99*) distinguished by the denomination of *Mascherate*; and hence Lorenzo has been esteemed the inventor of that species of dramatic pageant. Of the pieces which he composed for this purpose, a selection has been given by Mr. Roscoe. Amongst the many writers of eminence who occasionally employed their talents in these popular compositions we find Machiavelli, so often mentioned in this work. As a specimen of his powers in this species of

poetic trifling may not be unacceptable, I shall close this article with his

CANTO DE' DIAVOLI.

Già fummo, or non sam più, spiriti beati,
Per la superbia nostra
Dall' alto, e sommo ciel tutti scacciati;
E'n questa città vostra
Abbiam preso il governo,
Perchè quì si dimostra
Confusione, e duol più ch' in Inferno.

E fame, e guerra, è sangue, e ghiaccio, e foco;
Sopra ciascun mortale,
Abbiam messo nel mondo a poco, a poco;
E'n questo carnevale
Vegniamo a star con voi,
Perchè di ciascun male
Stati siamo, e farem principio noi.

Plutone è questo, e Proserpina è quella,
Che allato se gli posa,
Donna sopr' ogni Donna al Mondo bella;
Amor vince ogni cosa,
Però vinto costui,
Che mai non si riposa,
Perchè ognun faccia quel, c'ha fatto lui.

Ogni contento, e scontento d'Amore]
Da noi è generato,
E'l pianto, e'l riso, e'l canto, ed il dolore:
Che fusse innamorato
Segua il nostro volere,
E farà contentato,
Perchè d'ogni mal far pigliam piacere.

Nº. IX.

DESCRIPTION OF IL CARRO DELLA MORTE, OR CAR OF DEATH.

Vid. pag. 99.

VASARI has given a minute and petrifying description of this dismal spectacle, which M. Tenhove has interwoven with his History of the house of Medici. I shall take the liberty to borrow the translation of this passage by Sir Richard Clayton, who has reduced to lucid order, and embellished with new graces, the lively and defultory memoirs of that illustrious house, so sedulously collected by the ingenious Dutchman.

“ In the carnival, and in the night of its greatest festivity, the citizens gazed in horrid silence on this frightful scene, as it passed along the streets. It consisted of a black funeral car, on which were painted white crosses, and dead men’s bones. It was drawn by four buffaloes, and a ghastly figure with a scythe sat upon it. This figure represented Death, and had at its feet graves opening, out of which skeletons were continually issuing. Many hundred persons, clothed in black, with masks resembling death’s heads, marched before it, as well as followed it, with lighted flambeaux in their hands. The lights were so well regulated, and fell so exactly on the car,

and the procession, that the whole appeared very natural. Numbers of other masks, not less frightful, mounted on the poorest horses that could be found, with black housings trailing the ground, carried standards of black taffety, embroidered with crossed bones and tears. The skeletons, in trembling and mournful voices, sung penitential psalms, with the *Miserere*; and the instrumental music, corresponding with the vocal, added to the melancholy and petrifying spectacle. The car and the procession stopped before the palace of the gonfalonier Soderini and those of the principal citizens, apparently to do them honour; and the skeletons immediately began the chorus of

Morte siam', come vedete;
Così morti vedrem' voi:
Fummo già, come voi sete,
Voi farete come noi."

Mem. of the House of Medici, vol. ii. p. 121-124.

Vasari, tom. iii. p. 76-78.

The canzone, from which Vasari has given an extract, was written by Antonio Alamanni, and begins thus:

Dolor, pianto, e penitenza
Ci tormentan tuttavia;
Questa morta compagnia
Va gridando penitenza
Fummo già, &c.

A translation of this doleful ballad, from the elegant pen of Miss Bannerman, cannot fail of proving acceptable to the reader.

Anguish and tears and penance dread,
For ever scourges here;
This livid band of wand'ring dead
Go crying, to the numb'ring ear,
Penitence, penitence,—mortals hear!

Living once, as now thou art;
 Thou too shalt be as we;
 Dead as thou seest we are, thy heart
 As dead as ours shall be:
 Unrepenting, woe to thee!
 For thou shalt cry, in guilt and fear,
 Penitence, penitence!—none will hear.

Like thee at feast and carnival,
 We mock'd the speeding time;
 Adding, till the cup was full,
 Joy to joy, and crime to crime:
 Now we ring our warning chime
 O'er the earth, in funeral cry,
 Penitence, penitence,—ere thou die!

Blind, weak, and senseless, humbled kneel!
 All things shall pass away;
 Honours and state and glory feel
 An arm that none can stay;
 Unrepentant, who shall say
 In the grave we rest at last?
 Penitence, penitence,—all is past.

We bear a scythe whose gleaming blade
 Mows down the nations at a blow:
 Vital still, and undecay'd,
 On from life to life we go:
 But the life is bliss or woe:
 Vaunt not then of cloudless days,—
 Penitence, penitence,—kneel and praise.

Living, all shall sink to dust,
 Dying, every soul shall live;
 Lord of Lords! The law is just,—
 All have sinn'd—forgive, forgive!
 Penitent, thou wilt save alive:
 But ere dust to dust return,
 Penitence, penitence,—read the urn.

He that shrinks from other's woe
 The worm shall gnaw that never dies;
 But blessed are the tears that flow
 From mercy's heart when sorrow sighs
 Belov'd on earth to glory rise!
 Thou shalt not call in fear to heaven
 Penitence, penitence!—unforgiven.

All the historians of Italian literature, whom I have consulted, are silent in regard to the author of this canzone. But of Piero di Cosimo, the ingenious inventor of this horrible spectacle, a copious account is given by Vasari, in *Vite de' Pittori*, Fir. 1771, tom. iii.

When the Mascherate or Pageants began to sink into disuse they were succeeded by a species of dramatic amusement (*drammatico divertimento*) called ZINGARESQUE, in which females, under the character of gipsies, were introduced upon temporary stages, raised, without scenery, in squares and other open places, in different cities of Italy, reciting verses in dialogue, or singing Canzoni in parts, to the accompaniment of a guitar. Crescimbeni has preserved some of the pieces which were either said or sung on these occasions. One of these, intitled *La Zingara Tiburtina*, begins thus:

Mostra, donna gentile,
 La tua serena fronte,
 Che è lucido orizzonte
 A' miserelli.

Comm. intorno all' Ist. della Poes. Ital.

Lond. 1803, vol. ii. p. 169.

This species of vulgar amusement has not yet totally ceased in Italy. When I was in Turin, in 1792, I was present at a performance of this kind in the principal square of that city, and recollect with pleasure the beauty and admirable vocal powers

of one of the female performers. Libretti of the canzoni were handed about among the auditors. One of these, which I procured, now lies before me. I shall transcribe the beginning of one of the songs.

CANZONETTA NUOVA.

Sopra una Giovine che fa vedere la lanterna magica.

La mia Lanterna magica,
Putti che vuol vedere,
Con gran sommo piacere
A ognun veder farò.

Via tutti qui accostatevi
O giovini miei cari
Se non farete avari
Tutto vi mostrerò.

Giovini cari,
Tutti correte
Che goderete
Un bel piacer, &c.

Nº. X.

CHORUS OF THE DRYADS IN THE ORFEO OF
POLITIANO.

Vid. pag. 117.

Translated by Miss Bannerman.

Act ii. Sc. 2.

L'aria di pianti s'oda risuonare, &c.

Hark, hark! the soft winds low resound,—
Our hopes are gone, our glory fled!
Mourn, mourn! ye rivers murmuring round,
Ye drink the tears that 'balm the dead!

Before thy shadows, Death, decline
The stars of heaven, and veil their beams;
And every flower of summer secms,
Eurydice! in faded bloom,
To feel the breath that blighted thine.
And Love, while drooping Nature dies,
In deeper woe shall mingle sighs,
Eurydice! that thou wer't lur'd
By cruel Fate's avenging doom
From hope, from life, to darkness and the tomb.
Hark, hark! &c.

Ah Fortune ! serpent mining deep,
 In fear, in grief, in wrath, reveal'd !
 Torn as a lily from the field,
 She wither'd as the rose of morn
 Before the tempest's whelming sweep—
 Pale is that face and humbled low,
 That blush'd in beauty's living glow :
 Our joys are dust ! our sun decay'd !
 Those lucid eyes are quench'd in night,
 That shone to gladden earth and minister delight.
 Hark, hark ! &c.

And thou, whose soul-entrancing breath,
 First wak'd the lyre to love and woe !
 All silent now that magic flow
 That hush'd to peace the warring winds,
 And charm'd the iron ear of Death !
 Can music sooth when thou art lost
 Exulting Nature's proudest boast ?
 Thou, troubled ocean ! murmur deep—
 Let louder lamentations rise
 From desolated earth, and pierce the darken'd skies.

Hark, hark ! the soft winds low resound,—
 Our hopes are gone, our glory fled !
 Mourn, mourn ! ye rivers murmuring round,
 Ye drink the tears that 'balm the dead !

THIS beautiful ode, which has been so highly and so justly
 praised by Tiraboschi, and his French translator, M. Landi, I
 have great pleasure in submitting to the English reader, in the
 rich and flowing dress which it has received at the hands of

Miss Bannerman. Of the excellence of this version it is not for me to speak : I shall only observe, that its pathetic graces were probably heightened by the circumstances under which it was executed,—the pressure of the heaviest misfortune incident to life,—the loss of a beloved parent ! In consequence of this melancholy event, the version was late in reaching me, else it should have embellished my Analysis of the drama to which it belongs

Nº. XI.

ON THE REVIVAL OF THE ECLOGUE.

Vid. pag. 140. note (7.)

ALTHOUGH the Eclogue is not a decided drama, it is of a dramatic nature, and therefore intitled to our notice: besides, it gave birth to the Pastoral Drama, to the invention or perfection of which, the claim of Italy seems indisputable. "The absolute invention of the Pastoral Drama," says the noble friend whom I have quoted, pag. 140. note 7. "can scarcely be ascribed to any modern, since every Eclogue was a palpable hint towards it."

On the antiquity of the Eclogue it is not necessary to dwell. Every one knows that it was invented by Theocritus, and imitated by Virgil. To the modern Italians the revival of this species of poem, or poetical dialogue, is to be ascribed. "At the revival of learning in Italy," says Dr. Johnson, "it was soon discovered that a dialogue of imaginary swains might be composed with little difficulty; because the conversation of shepherds excludes profound or refined sentiment; and, for images and descriptions, Satyrs and Fauns, and Naiads and Dryads, were always within call; and woods and meadows, and hills and rivers, supplied variety, which, having a natural

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power to sooth the mind, did not quickly cloy it." (*Life of Philips*). The first attempt at reviving this species of poem was made by Petrarca. "Petrarch," continues the eloquent biographer, "entertained the learned men of his age with the novelty of modern pastorals in Latin. More than a century afterwards (1498) Mantuan," he adds, "published his Bucolics with such success that they were soon dignified by Badius with a comment, and, as Scaliger complained, received into schools, and taught as classical." *Ibid.* While Mantuan was teaching the Italian shepherds to sing, Sannazaro was reducing the conversation of the Neapolitan fishermen to the form of an eclogue. This species of Idyllium, which has been ridiculed with all the wantonness of wit, has been ably defended by Mr. Swinburne. "Sannazaro," says he, "has been censured for making the sea and its shores the scene of his Eclogues; but whoever condemns his piscatory idyls, merely as such, must derive his dislike from his own familiarity with the boisterous gloomy aspect of our northern ocean, and the process of a whale fishery; he would be more indulgent to the author were he acquainted with the glassy bays of the Neapolitan sea; where a smooth azure surface reflects large masses of super-impending rocks, richly crowned with groves that spread their boughs and roots in that wild majestic style so admirably touched by Salvator Rosa. It was in these bays that Claude and Poussin imbibed their ideas of landscape; and surely scenes that employed the pencil of such masters, cannot be deemed unworthy of a poet's pen. The operations that attend fishing in the Mediterranean are far from unpleasant to the sight or the imagination; and besides, if we discard all poetical glosses, an handsome fisherman, though soiled with scales of fish and salt water, is at least as sweet a swain for a nymph to sigh for, as a tender of sheep or goats, animals not remarkable for agreeable odours. Those poems of Sannazaro

always afford me great pleasure in the perusal, as they trace a most lively description of nature, without running into the threadbare similes and metaphors with which all bucolic poetry has been patched up since the days of Theocritus." *Travels in the two Sicilies*, Lond. 1790, vol. iii. 76-77. See also, *Introduction to Piscatory Eclogues*, by P. Fletcher. Edinb. 1771.

As the Italians are generally allowed to be the revivers of the Eclogue, so they are probably the only nation who realize it. "Another evening," says Mr. Wright, "as we were walking on the Pincian mount, we met with a very agreeable entertainment, a sort of *Carmen Amabilem*, much in the manner of the old Eclogue. Two persons had placed themselves under the wall of the duke of Tuscany's palace, (Villa de' Medici) with their guitars, and sang alternate. They were at first very courteous and complaisant; then, taking occasion from some little incidents, they went to their *mutua convicia*, their little taunts and banters; after that, by degrees, all matters were healed, and they parted very good friends. They managed the matter so, that the poetical dialogue seemed at least, if it were not really, extempore: several of the company did believe the greatest part of it was so; for many of these fellows have a head very much turned that way; and their frequent practice may make it easy enough. Be that as it will, it was very pleasant and entertaining." *Obser. made in travelling through France and Italy*, vol. i. p. 363, Lond. 1764. A scene, similar to the one which has been just described, does not perhaps occur in the sylvan shades of any other country.

SANNAZARO is thus noticed by Ariosto,—

Giacobo Sannazar, ch' à le Camene
Lasciar fa i monti, et abitar l'arene.

Orl. Fur. cant. xlvi. ff. 17.

A just tribute of praise has been paid to the Idylliums of this pleasing poet by Benedetto Menzini, in the third canto of his *Arte Poetica Italiana*, recently published, with great accuracy and elegance, by T. J. Mathias, esquire; a gentleman to whom the admirers of the Italian muse are deeply indebted. The several publications which Mr. Mathias has condescended to edit, will remain eternal monuments of an ardent zeal, directed by taste and judgment, for the revival and promotion of Italian literature in England.

N°. XII.

CONJECTURES ON THE FIORENZA OF LORENZINO DE' MEDICI.

Vid. pag. 227.

M. TENHOVE mentions a tragedy by Lorenzino de' Medici intitled *Fiorenza*, which, as well as the *Aridosio* of the same author, was also exhibited before the unfortunate Alessandro de' Medici. "Laurent," says he, "fit représenter un drame de sa façon dont le titre étoit *Fiorenza*, dans le prologue il s'excusent sur sa jeunesse, et promettoit une autre tragédie dans peu, dont les spectateurs seraient plus contents." I have sought in vain for M. Tenhove's authority for this information; nor have I been able to discover a tragedy with that title in any of the bibliothecal works I have consulted. I am therefore inclined to believe, that the drama to which M. Tenhove alludes, was a comedy by this extraordinary man mentioned by Ruscelli in his *Supplim. alla Storia del Giouio*. p. 31, 32.; for, in the prologue to this drama, the author apologised, on account of his youth, for its defects, but promised the spectators in a little time another piece with which he hoped they would be fully satisfied. This promise was supposed to be a covert allusion to his intention of assassinating Alessandro. Ruscelli

does not mention the title of this comedy ; but as the scene would seem to have been laid in Florence, it is probable it bore the name of that city ; or it might have been *Lo Stragemma dello spedale dei Tuffatori*, a comedy which, Quadrio (tom. v. p. 68) informs us, was left in manuscript by Lorenzino. In this piece (whatever its title may have been) the author darkly hinted at the amours of the duke : “ egli la n’ empi,” says Ruscelli, “ di molti bei tratti che copertamente narravano alcune cose note solamente al duca ; de’ suoi amici, e delle corna, che molti portavano in testa ; di che il duca si prendeva maraviglioso piacere.”

I had it once in contemplation to amplify this article with the admirable scene in the *Aridolfo* of Lorenzino, to which I have alluded (pag. 228) ; but I have been induced to relinquish the idea, in the hope that the whole comedy may soon find a translator duly qualified to do it justice. Adapted to our stage, it would enrich it.

N°. XIII.

ON THE SCENARIO, OR DRAMATIC SKELETON, OF THE ITALIAN STAGE.

Vid. pag. 251.

FEARING the application of the poet's remark, that

Nothing is done, while aught remains to do,

I used all possible diligence to procure the *Teatro di Flaminio Scala*, in order to be enabled to lay before my readers a Scenario, or dramatic skeleton, as Baretti terms it; but all my exertions to obtain a copy of that work were fruitless. I must therefore have recourse to Riccoboni, who, in his *Observations sur la Comédie*, introduces a few specimens of the *Canevas Italien* in the French language. One of these I shall borrow:

LELIO et ARLEQUIN, Valets dans la même maison.

Comédie Italienne à l'impromptu.

Lelio est amoureux de Flaminia, fille de Pantalon, riche banquier de Venise; comme il n'est connu de personne dans cette ville, il prend le parti de se mettre au service de ce

veillard, afin d'être plus à portée de jouir de la vue de sa maitresse. Pour y micux réussir, il se presente à Pantalon, comme un homme habile dans le commerce, et le prévient sur le champ en sa faveur. Arlequin valet de Pantalon devient jaloux de son crédit, et ne néglige jusqu' à la fin de la pièce aucune occasion de le persécuter.

Riccoboni pronounces the first act of the *Avare* of Moliere an imitation of the comedy of which the foregoing canvaas exhibits the argument.



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